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WIZARD©

No. 11

THE GUIDE TO COMICS

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WIZARD

Volume 1
Number 11
July 1992

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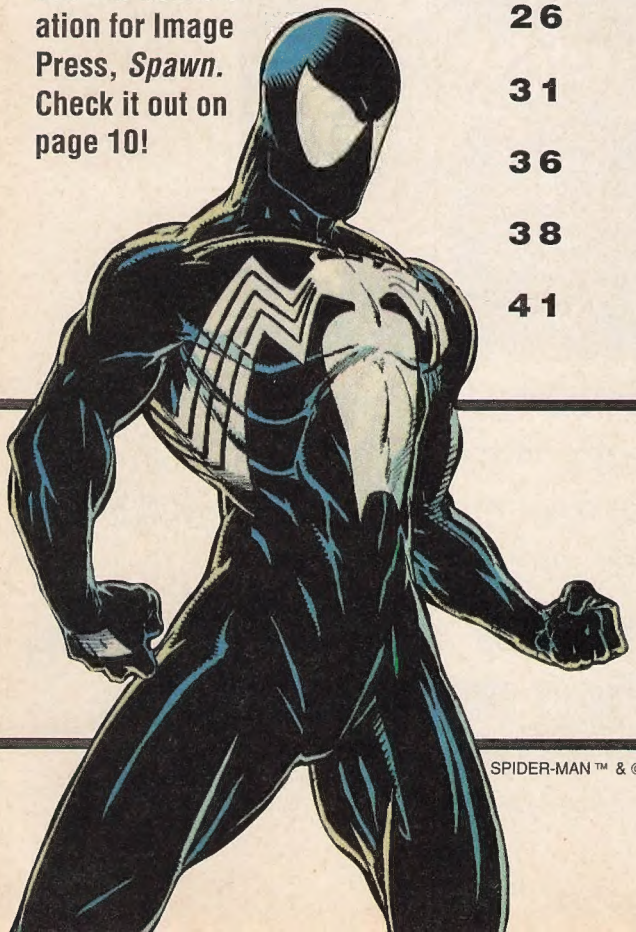
OUR COVER STORY

reveals all you wanted to know about Todd McFarlane and his new creation for Image Press, *Spawn*. Check it out on page 10!



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WIN!

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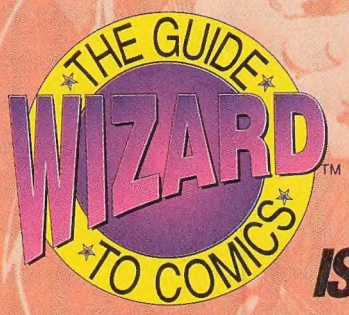

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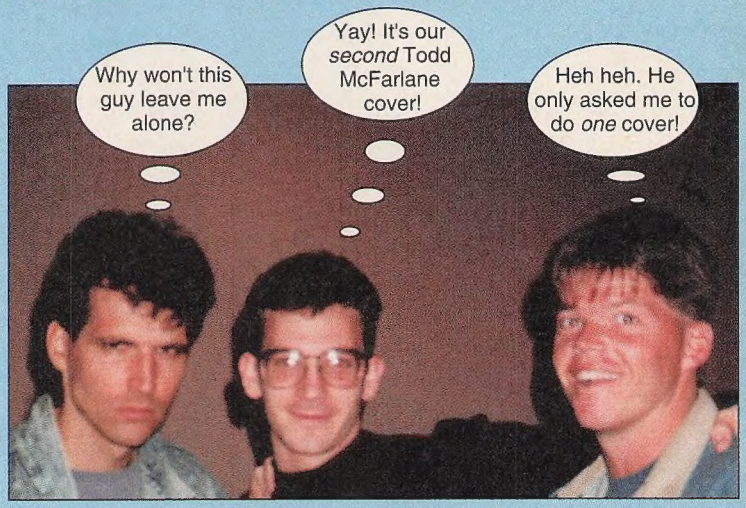
A Letter From Our Publisher



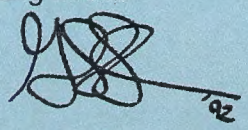
Todd McFarlane,Gareb Shamus and Rob Liefeld discuss Wizard covers.

Oops, sorry for telling you prematurely about our Shadowhawk card by Jim Valentino. So to make up for this little oops (a word which I banned over at Wizard Headquarters), next month we will have *two* cards. The first will be our Shadowhawk card, and the second will be a Wolverine promo card from those great folks over at Comic Images. This card will introduce their new set called "Wolverine: From Then To Now".

There's so much cool stuff in this issue, I won't say anything except "enjoy." But... I will talk more about next issue. Jim Lee, Jim Lee, Jim Lee - we're talking cover, interview, poster, and pictures - it's going to be great!

Next month will also mark the end of our first smash year as the number one guide to comics. Get ready for a great second year that'll be bigger and better than the first. To start it all off, Ghost Rider will be blazing onto issue 13's cover with a really slick piece by Nelson, the guy who brought you the awesome cover to Ghost Rider #18. Issue 13 will also have an original Dragon trading card by Erik Larsen--the third in Wizard's line of trading cards. This industry has gone through some big changes - with lots more exciting products. So don't expect any less from *Wizard.*

Hang Loose



Gareb S. Shamus

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BATMAN: RUN, RIDDLER, RUN

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A Letter From Our Editor
No Impact Whatsoever

A few issues back, I wrote about the unfortunate absence of comic books clearly aimed at younger readers, or at readers who were just starting to get interested in comics. I pointed to DC's Impact line as a good beginning of such an approach.

It looks like "beginning" was the wrong word...it's also the end. DC has announced that the Impact titles are going on "hiatus" and will be back in a revamped form next year—a form more in keeping with what comics-shop buyers seem to want. A promising attempt to reach a new market dies aborning.

Without wanting to seem too harsh here, the only word I can use to describe DC's decision is "panic". Yes, the Impact titles were not doing well in the comics shops—but, by DC's own admission, they were not targeted at that audience. The audience was emergent comics readers outside the direct-sales market...and DC could not possibly have had final sales figures from the returnable market on more than the first two or three issues of each Impact title when the "hiatus/revamp" decision was announced.

The Impact line could not reasonably have been expected to be instantly profitable. Building the audience that DC *said* it wanted takes time...it isn't done in a year. And they haven't even given it that. Ideally, the line should have been given up to two years to find its audience—or, actually, for its audience to find Impact.

Of course, not all the blame can be placed on DC's bean counters. The Impact creative team dropped the ball, I think, in immediately getting into standard 1980s-'90s continued stories. If you're really looking to get new readers, you have to assume a lot of them won't find you until #2, or #3, or maybe #10, so you have to have complete-in-one-issue stories (perhaps with a few underlying subplots)—something like the earliest Marvels—or else you're confusing them just as much as 50 years of continuity will.

Unfortunately, what DC once would have recognized (in the days before direct-sale), has been lost, because the direct-sale market has made it so easy to make cut-and-dried decisions on extremely short order. "It didn't make the 60,000 mark (or whatever)on the first issue—cancel it as of #4!" Of course, through excellent word-of-mouth, it might have made the 120,000 mark on the fifth issue...but now they'll never know.

It all boils down to this: If a subsidiary of the largest entertainment conglomerate in the world can't make a commitment to lose money for a couple of years on a line of eight books—on the premise that the line will mean greater returns for the entire company down the line—then I can't figure out who *could* afford it.

-Patrick Daniel O'Neill

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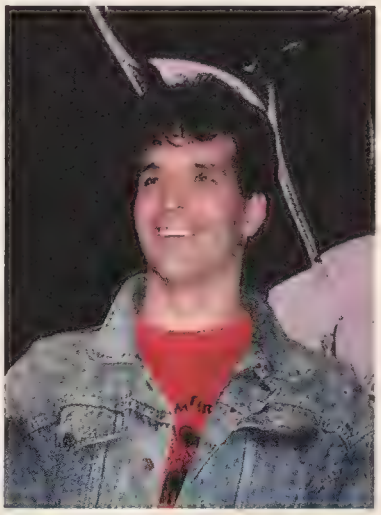
by Gareb Shamus

SPAWNING A NEW IMAGE

WIZARD: A lot of people consider you to be an overnight success--that you worked on *Amazing Spider-Man* and boom, you were a hit. This really isn't true. What are some of your earliest published works?
McFARLANE: *Coyote,* for Epic, was the first book I ever worked on. From there I did a two year stint on *Infinity Inc.* for DC Comics, with Roy Thomas as writer, then I went to Marvel and did 1-1/2 years on the *Hulk* with Peter David. Somewhere in between that I did "Batman Year II" and a bunch of odds-and-ends.
WIZARD: How did you get your start in the comic book world?
McFARLANE: Probably the same way as everybody else. I just handed out my samples to the editors at conventions and rammed them down people's throats, over and over and over and over. Eventually they got tired of me sending in samples so they gave me some work.
WIZARD: Your style of drawing is revolutionary. You practically rewrote the rules of drawing comics and have since become one of the biggest names in the field. Have you had any formal training to develop your style?
McFARLANE: I got a degree in Graphic Design to get into commercial art. So I think some of the stuff I did on *Infinity Inc.* was pretty wacko. Not so much on the stuff with the *Hulk* because they were cracking the whip on me there. But once I established my name with Marvel they gave me a lot more freedom to do whatever I wanted. Most of my stuff is more graphic design like capes. They don't flow like cloth, they're more like folded paper in that I could have sharp edges on it and not have anything soft. A lot of guys that can draw better anatomy than I can, I just try to stay with my strength.

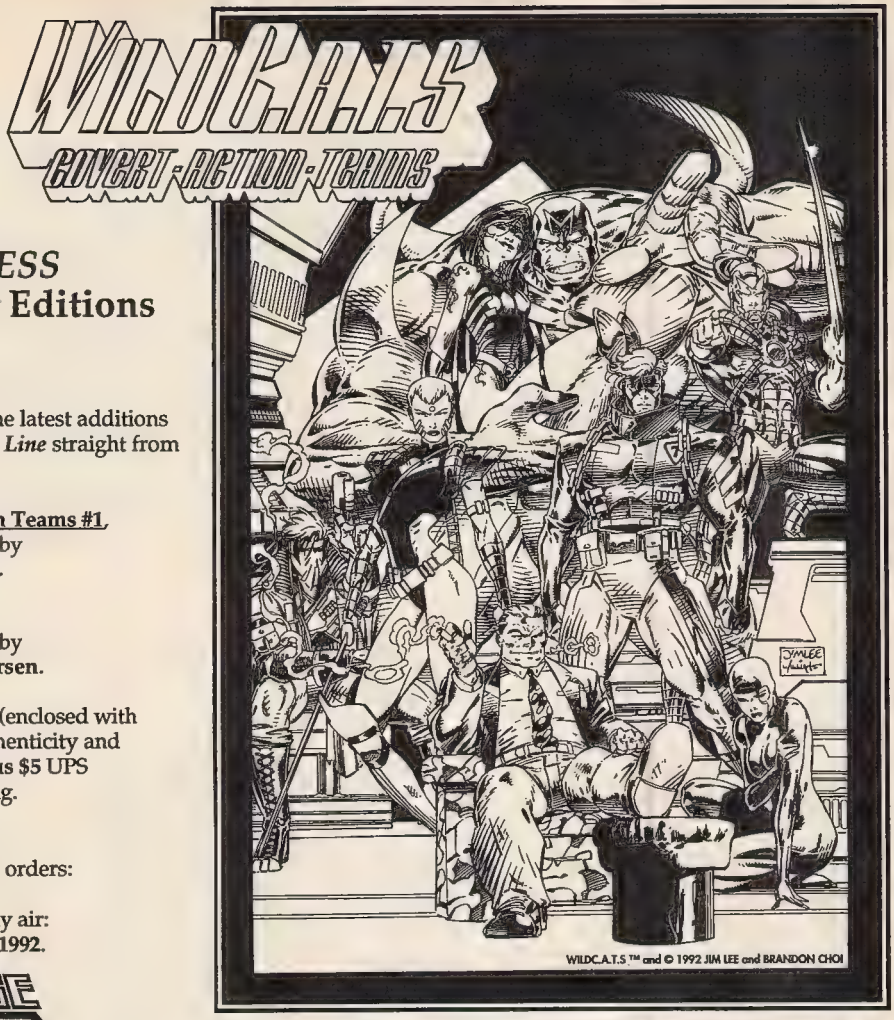
Todd McFarlane talks with Wizard about his past and future...



I'm not big on formal training. The things that I think makes comic books cool, or just makes superheroes comic books cool, are not things that you teach people. People look at my stuff or Jim Lee's, or Rob Liefeld's and they have the big bazooka guns that don't exist, these Lizard man letters, the blast coming from the guys' hands that look like they've got life; That stuff is not in our world.

Do I draw a good garbage can? Probably not, but there are guys that do. There are a lot of guys out there that do great referencing and have the anatomy down perfect almost to the point that it becomes stale. They're so concerned about drawing things correctly that they've forgotten the excitement of drawing. I think as long as visually it hits the spot and the kids kind of look at it and go "Oh my God!" Who cares whether every nut and bolt is in the right place and every muscle is structured or has the right tension. The guys that can do both generate excitement. A guy like Jim Lee can do both. He's got the anatomy down perfect and he still does all the big guns and all the cool stuff, and that's one of the reasons why he's got such a wide appeal. He's bringing both. He's not forcing you to accept his style. He's giving it to you. Guys like him don't come along too often.
WIZARD: How do you feel about guys who have made a career by mimicking your style?
McFARLANE: I don't really think that there are that many of them out there. A lot of the things that people give me credit for, I didn't invent. What I did was popularize it. Some of the things are recognized as mine because I did them over and over again and I just maybe happened to get credit for it. I'm not saying that I did all that much stuff original, I just happened to throw it in people's faces over and over.

I don't see that many people that are really mimicking my style. What I am seeing is if Rob wants to do a huge closeup of a big eyeball and Jim Lee wants to use a border around his panels, and Erik [Larsen] wants to take something else that he likes of mine, I don't have a problem with that. That keeps me on my toes, because even though they're borrowing some of the ideas that I have, they're also putting their own ideas in it, and sometimes I use some of their ideas. I see it more as a sharing of ideas. If somebody can use my style and do a better job than I can, then they're more talented or I'm



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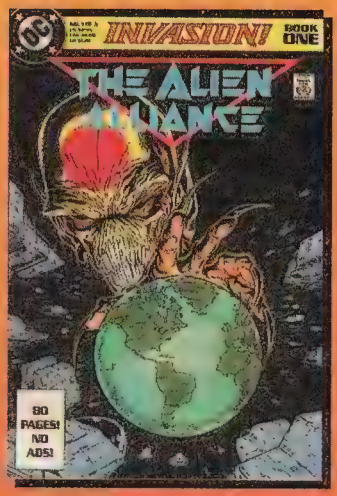
getting lazy. It doesn't bug me really.
WIZARD: In your spare time do you draw anything outside of comics?
McFARLANE: Nope.
WIZARD: You did a lot of work for DC before you went to Marvel. Were you happy at DC? Why the move?
McFARLANE: When you're young you're kind of insecure. Like now, I'm a world-beater, I think. What happened was that I was working with Roy Thomas who is a very nice man, and I never had any problems with Roy, and we always got along, but he had tons of work for me. He would have kept me working 'til doomsday but, at some point in my career, I just wanted to know if I was in the business because Roy Thomas liked me or because I had something to offer to more than one person. I wanted to break away to see if there were other people out there that actually liked my work or responded to it, because Roy would have kept me there for ten years.
WIZARD: What do you enjoy most, plotting, scripting or drawing?
McFARLANE: Probably right now inking, because a lot of the stuff I do is real disorganized but the actual inking is when I do the drawing. So, for the first time, I actually like the finished version. In a way, that's where I'm really the kid and that's where I go "Wow, Todd!" Either that page didn't come out looking like you want it, or it came out looking better than you wanted. I kinda blob out a figure and when I go in there with the ink is when I actually start putting in a little rendering and the cross-hatching and the fine, fine details and stuff like that. I work that way too so that I don't keep looking at the work over and over again in the same way. I did thumbnails and then I penciled it tight, and then I inked. By the time I inked it I was looking at it for the third time. I want to be excited and keyed up about the work because it keeps me excited about comic books.
WIZARD: Was the idea for the new *Spider-Man* title your or Marvel's?
McFARLANE: That was Marvel. There was a little bit of talk of coming out with a new book even when I was on *Amazing*. A number of them crossed our desk just in passing, but when I quit *Amazing*, I didn't know what my next job was going to be. I quit *Amazing* and was looking at a void. I quit *Amazing* because I wanted to start doing some writing and by a fluke they wanted to do another Spider-Man book. When I quit *Amazing* it was kind of at the height of my career. It didn't hurt me when I came back and then quit the *Spider-Man* book, mostly because I was having a baby daughter. I think there is a lot of fear among the creative people that they can't be off the stands for more than one month and that people are going to forget about them. I'm a perfect example to prove that it's not so: that if you keep coming back and giving them something they want, you can take a mental break. And mentally I'm ready. I'm ready to go.
WIZARD: How was Venom created—his character, his design?
McFARLANE: He was kind of flukey. The only description that Dave Michelinie gave me was that it was going to be a costume on a real big dude. I was doing the *Hulk* at the time so I was used to doing big guys, but just to make him look like Spider-Man didn't seem to make much sense to me. Again, if you look at some of the stuff that I did on the *Hulk* - I made him big and hunched over - he kinda looks like monsters and kinda rambling and stuff.

I didn't have any details other than to make Venom big. I didn't know he was going to be human underneath, so I gave him that big Cheshire grin and I found out later that he was actually human. If I had known that in advance maybe I would have done things somewhat differently, but it seemed to work. Each time I drew him, the smile got bigger, the eyes got bigger, the fangs got bigger, and the slob got slobbier. The kids like him.
WIZARD: Your newest venture is *Spawn* from the newly formed Image Comics. How did you get hooked up with Image?
McFARLANE: Rob and I have always been talking about doing something together; like he'd do a three-issue mini series and I'd do a three-issue mini-series and then we'd tie them into each other, and we would have ourselves a cool looking thing. But when I quit *Spider-Man* I was just kinda kicking back and Rob was going to do the *Youngblood* thing. He really didn't notify me. Because if I would have known, I would have had something right there when *Youngblood* came out. Once I saw *Youngblood* there, I knew I wanted to come back and do something on my own. I just figured at that point, too many guys had quit on their own and it was time that we have to do something that would stay and help all of our careers. I've broken a few rules along the way, why change now, why quit now, why quit like everyone else? I'm going to quit with a bang. I could see that Rob was already talking about it. Erik I knew was talking about it too, so I knew there was three of us. And then it was just a matter of going up there and getting a little deeper

A Todd McFarlane Portfolio



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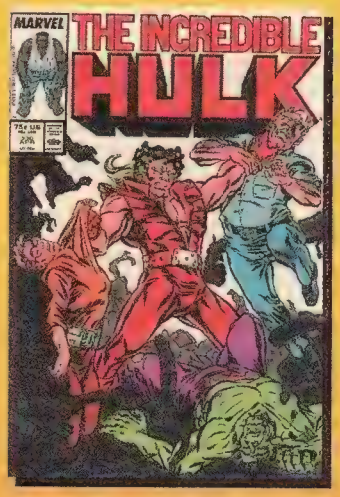
than just three people.
WIZARD: How did you create the Spawn character?
McFARLANE: He was created years ago. I don't even remember the exact year - 1981 or '82. I broke into comics in late '84, '85. Spawn has been around for a long time, from back in my fandom days. As a matter of fact I've got about 12 guys that I created years ago and they're just sitting there now, but we'll update them for certain situations.

I added some things to Spawn and updated him, but the actual costume is exactly the same. He actually looks a little more old fashioned than the other guys. Most superheroes seem to look more like the X-Men and X-Force and Youngblood and Jim Lee's WILDC.A.T.S coming up - more Terminator-type costumes and things like that.
WIZARD: Does it feel different working on Spawn than on Spidey?
McFARLANE: No, not really. For all intents and purposes, everything that I'm doing could probably fit into the Marvel or DC Universe. What if I had quit *Spider-Man* and Marvel said "you can create your own book" and I said "*Spawn*" and they said "cool"? The only difference would be that I can't have Spidey in my book, but everything that I do could probably be pretty much in a Marvel comic book.
WIZARD: What are some of the early story lines on *Spawn*?
McFARLANE: The first issue is sort of a "get to know this guy." It's going to take about seven or eight months to get most of this story behind us. If you follow what I did on Spider-Man--whether you liked it or didn't like it; we don't have time to debate that now--but at least you can acknowledge to me that it was different from the other Spider-Man books. For better or for worse, I *tried* to make it different. I'm using that same attitude on Spawn in that Rob, Erik, Jim and the other guys are going to do some good classy superhero stuff, so my book is probably going to be the weirdest of all of them, just because those guys are doing superheroes. And if they do weird books, then *I'll* do a superhero book. It's going to be more of Todd trying to do a David Lynch type of comic book--except you can't get that wacko because there are a lot of kids who try to follow it. But there's going to be a lot of bizarre flashbacks: I'll give you pieces of information that all kind of tie together to make a lot more sense than some of the mystery stuff I tried to do with Spider-Man. So the first issue you'll get to know him - the second issue would be more like a typical villain story. The guy is named Violator and he looks a little fat, 5' 4", wacky, just a little porker belly, looks like a cartoon character, and he's going to be hassling Spawn in issue #2, and try to kill him and slaughter him. At the end of issue #2, you'll see his true form and in #3 we'll meet his wife. Something like that.
WIZARD: You're going to be doing a regular series, not a mini-series, right?
McFARLANE: Yup—to give some legitimacy to this line, we are going to have one full series to start.
WIZARD: Does Image Press have plans for crossovers like *Secret Wars* or *Unity*?
McFARLANE: We haven't talked about that and my feeling is that you'll see individual crossovers long before you see a big *Secret Wars*-type crossover. Just because it would be a helluva thing to try and coordinate and yet they're doing it over at Valiant and I admire them. That's a pretty big thing.

Even though it sells and it seems to work, in my mind you can't really come up with something that's big enough to really justify something like that. It's gotta be something like the end of the earth or something like that - and the only reason that I, personally, might end up doing it is because all characters don't fit into the same story lines. Even the *Secret Wars*– Spider-Man shouldn't be there on an alien planet. That's my personal opinion. Batman shouldn't be on an alien planet. Daredevil shouldn't be on an alien planet. Sometimes it's hard to mix certain superheroes together, with certain bad guys, and have it work. I'd rather tell you the truth. Just cross over with characters that I think fit in with Spawn and vice-versa, and maybe go looking to other companies to do crossovers. I talked to Dark Horse yesterday and hopefully there will be a *Spawn vs Aliens* or a *Spawn vs Predator* project.
WIZARD: Who is your favorite comic book character to draw?
McFARLANE: I don't really have a favorite, but I wouldn't mind drawing Batman or something like that, but doing Spawn with capes and stuff like that I get my fix on it. I never really had a guy that I've always wanted to take a crack at. Part of it is that I got into comic books late so that's really never been a factor, like what books I decide to do. I just kind of take them like they come. I get into every book that I end up doing.
WIZARD: Is there anyone in particular that you like working with, or anyone that you wouldn't work with?
McFARLANE: Anyone I wouldn't work with? For the most part, ninety percent of the editors out there, just

A Todd McFarlane Portfolio



INCREDIBLE HULK and AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ™ & © 1992 Marvel. DETECTIVE COMICS ™ & © 1992 DC Comics.

because I'm in no mood to have some 25-year-old guy who's never written or drawn a comic book telling me how to write or draw a comic book. I've got a bad attitude about somebody who can't do something or has never done something I feel has no right to tell me what to do. I wouldn't profess to tell somebody how to edit, so I'll be darned if I'm going to let them tell me how to do a comic book. As far as working with somebody, I'm pretty content working by myself right now. The only guy that I'd like to share a stable with down the line would be Frank Miller, maybe draw one of his stories or collaborate on something, other than that I have too much fun working with myself.

WIZARD: Who do you admire in the comics industry?

McFARLANE: Artistically, Frank. Early on it was guys like John Byrne, George Perez, Michael Golden. There was a time that Art Adams was the hottest thing since sliced bread, he brought a lot of things to comics.

WIZARD: Do you read comic books?

McFARLANE: Nope.

WIZARD: Not one title?

McFARLANE: No, I hardly ever re-read my own stuff.

WIZARD: Anybody recommend anything that you should read?

McFARLANE: I'm pretty fickle. A lot of times I'll just thumb through a *Cerebus* or something like that. The superhero stuff - I really don't read it, because I feel that if I read it, I will subconsciously do something in my book that's already been done. I just like to sink or swim on my own. If I don't look at a lot of stuff, it allows my own style to come through, and it comes through a little easier.

WIZARD: Your run on *Spider-Man* has been monstrously successful, with your book constantly on the top of the charts. What prompted your exodus from Marvel? Rumors have it there was a major falling out because of a dispute over the Venom character. Any truth to that?

McFARLANE: No. I think there are still some mysteries about Venom which are still unresolved. Ninety percent of why I left is because my wife and I were having our first child. I was quitting anyway. I don't care whether everything was "hunky-dory" or everything was bad. Once the baby came, good or bad, I wasn't going to continue working. At that time, when things were going good, I was working with Jim Salicrup and he was removed from the book. So it just felt like an easy time to get off. He was leaving and I knew I was leaving - so I felt here's a good time, let's just leave as a whole. Some of the reasons why I left them are moral reasons. Nothing really to do with *Spider-Man*, more general reasons.

WIZARD: What do you want your fans to know about Todd McFarlane that they don't already know?

McFARLANE: That I squeeze the toothpaste from the middle just like the rest of them. To tell you the truth, because of the success that I have gotten, I've got more sympathy to the people that are in a successful position. Once you get near the top, it's easy for people to take pot shots at you. For the most part the people that take pot shots at you are not the people that I really care about. If a guy who never reads super-heroes, and hates super-heroes, thinks my stuff sucks, it's irrelevant—but if a 14 year old kid who reads *Spider-Man* doesn't like my stuff, that concerns me because he's my audience. Lots of the stuff that I have heard of comes out of frustration from certain people either not attaining some of their own goals or whatever, because of decisions on their own part. I think they would find that I really haven't changed in the last ten years. I'm still the same dink. If I'm a dink today, it's got nothing to do with being popular, it's because I was always a dink. If I'm nice, it's not because I'm popular, it's because I've always been nice. What happened in my career I don't think has really done anything to me personally. It's a completely different thing when I'm dealing with business. I know where I stand in the field, it's just when it comes to going to conventions and seeing the kids and things like that. I'm as accommodating and polite as I used to be. Again, crowds are a little bit bigger these days.

WIZARD: If you had the opportunity to go back in your career and change one thing, what would it be?

McFARLANE: I don't really have that many regrets. The only major blunder that I have in my career would be not completing that DC *Invasion* project. That was more of guilt on my part, but otherwise I had a bad attitude about a lot of people because I follow my heart and I've done everything that I wanted to do. As far as I can see I haven't suffered because I found out that I've done fairly well for myself. Even if I do get burned, I still look at the odds and look at the outcome. In the long run, I still win 19 out of 20, so usually I'm really hard to teach a lesson. I guess I'm pretty set in my ways a lot sooner than I would have been, if I didn't get to this level.

WIZARD: How do you see the comic book industry and where would you like it to be a few years from now? How do you perceive it in terms of its growth?

McFARLANE: My perception of the comic book industry is no different than trading cards were a couple of years ago. I see with the *Batman* movie coming out, some of the things that Image is adding and Dark Horse is adding and Valiant is adding, new hip stuff that you guys are bringing to it, I see a huge growth. I see lots of growth. Unfortunately, the same could have been said about sports cards a few years ago. The one thing that I'd like to see before we get into the same boat as the sports cards, where

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people got stuck with stuff that they couldn't sell, I'd like to see the retailers more than anybody else educate themselves about the book. It's too easy to look at the order form and say Wolverine, Venom, Punisher, Batman and Superman and order that book just because it's those characters without knowing whether or not there's a story behind it. You have to look at the creative people. The retailers end up getting stuck with these books just because it's got a cool character, but it looks like a piece of shit, you know what I mean? Or it reads like a piece of shit or something like that and they're getting stuck with this and they're getting mad. They should be mad at themselves more than anyone else. I'd like to see them get away from this buying stuff blindly just because it has a certain label on it, or something like that. You can buy a no-name character book with Jim Lee on it, and sell that a lot easier than you can a good-name character like *Wonder Woman* because it doesn't have anybody on it, so take a look at it and make more of an educated decision on what you're buying, because that's what the readers are doing. That's why you're getting stuck with these books. Because the readers know the quality.

WIZARD: Anyone in the industry that you want to say something to? That you want everybody to know? Criticize or compliment them?

McFARLANE: I guess my only words would be to the rest of Image. My fellow peers, something like that, just keep doing what you're doing as long as it makes you happy to know that there are other options out there. On the other hand, just because I wouldn't do what you do and you wouldn't do what I do, doesn't mean that we can't be kindred spirits still. I think, as artists and writers, we should all be somewhat cell mates and fight for a common cause. There are lots of options out there and I hope that there are other people that can take advantage of them.

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Gareb Shamus finds out about all the changes at

SkyBox INTERNATIONAL

A TALK WITH PRESIDENT FRANK O'CONNELL

WIZARD: First of all, why did you decided to change the name, especially since Impel is starting to become a household name with all the kids?

Frank O'Connell: We wanted a name that could be very easily identifiable. One that will be more consistent with our strategy to establish a more recognizable name brand for the products. We found *Hoops* and *NBA* have been presented in a more powerful way than Impel. It's much easier to associate with a brand name, so now we can say *Skybox* baseball, *Skybox* football, etc. The name Impel was hard to work with because it just wasn't relevant enough to sports and entertainment. We have been doing some testing that shows Skybox relates to sports and entertainment, implying the best seats in the house. We figured if we're going to make the change, we'd better make it now.

WIZARD: As far as the older products are concerned, are you going to try to re-adjust them as being Skybox products?

O'Connell: Yes. Actually, everything now going forward we're moving to Skybox. We're not going to drop any of those products, we're just going to move them to the Skybox name.

Along with changing their name from Impel to SkyBox, O'Connell and crew have hired Magic Johnson as their new spokesperson.

WIZARD: Why Magic Johnson as spokesman, and who else was considered?

O'Connell: Let me first try to answer why Magic. There are very few celebrities in the world that are as recognized as Magic. It may be - you know how ratings are done - that Magic was the number one, most- recognized athlete world-wide, and when you get down to all entertainers, sometimes like two or three, so that's one major reason. There weren't many options that came close to him. Second is that Magic relates very well to children and relates well, we feel, to trading cards. Trading cards appeal to kids and they appeal to the kid in the adult, and we felt that that is an area where Magic is so personable and so natural. I think, when you see the television commercials, he can touch that so sincerely. We've got a whole series of tapes when we first started talking to him.

He starts out about his childhood. "Tell me about your childhood, tell me about trading cards." You could never write a script for the way he expresses it. He collected cards as a kid, he is a tremendous fan and he is heavily into entertainment, so he sees tons of movies, he goes to lots of sports events, he's got a very wide ranging aura about him, and I think he's a powerful relevant spokesperson for Skybox.

WIZARD: I went to the NBA All-Star game this year. It was just unbelievable.

O'Connell: Very few people have the ability to be like that. He's naturally sincere. When he talks about trading cards and you see him in the commercial, it's like you can't write anything for him. He just says it.

WIZARD: He's really good at that. What's next for the future of comic related products from Skybox?

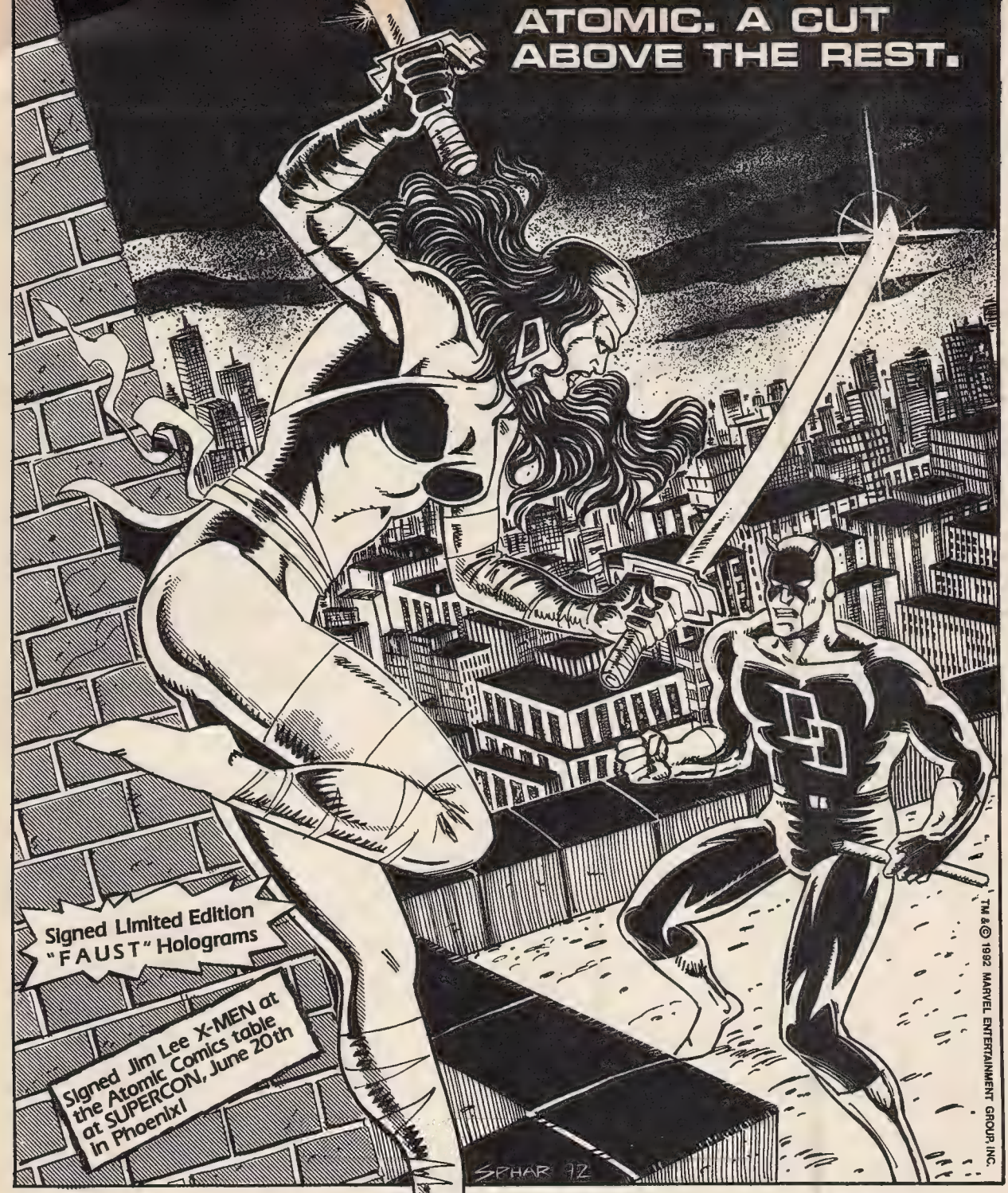
O'Connell: Well as you know now, we're releasing Marvel III which is literally sold out. We're working on some of the scheduling on some of this. We're going to have Hanna-Barbera products, Rocky and Bullwinkle, Marvel Masterpieces, and we recently acquired the license for Archie and also Garfield, which are going to be in the fourth quarter. We've got quite an array of products. Every piece of research that we do says the entertainment side of the industry is probably the fastest growing side. About the time I came in, people were trying to question whether that was a real business for trading cards, and, of course, it has exploded. We've been fortunate to have great, great licenses and be part of that. We did a piece of research of about 45,000 households and what we found out from that was that of the trading card purchasers who have come in in the last six months, most of them came in on entertainment products.

WIZARD: That's the way to appeal to the mass market and get them involved in the collecting, and once they're collecting, then you have them for good.

O'Connell: We can't qualify the numbers, we haven't tried to do a piece of research that determines this, but it sure looks to us like even the traders who have been in the sports area now are starting to come into the entertainment product. We're interested in two facets. Quite frankly, number one, particularly on the entertainment side, we want to go after the fans. We want the cards to be interesting and fun when you open them up and have an inherent entertainment value to them. Then, secondarily, it's great if it becomes a card that people want to collect and trade. But we're not just driving after the collectability of the trade, because our feeling is that we have to make this market grow if we're all going to do well here. We have to keep the market growing. We need new consumers and we need consumers who are not just going to be the high-intensity collectors, but we need people who are going to be fans as well.

WIZARD: What is your background that led up to working with Skybox and Impel? What had you done prior to this?

O'Connell: I was the president of Reebok and then before that president and CEO of HBO Video, pre-recorded video cassette operations of



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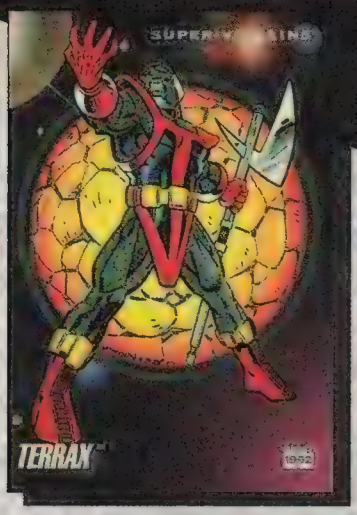

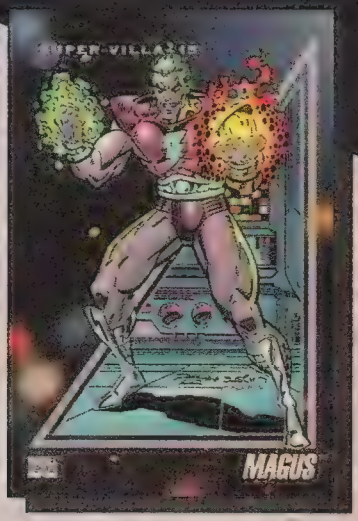

Time, Inc. Before that I worked for Mattel. I spent most of my life dealing with kids someplace between 8 and 18. A lot of that has been what I consider to be new pop culture trends, and how you spot them and how you fuel those trends and move with them. Of course, you can see I've also spent part of my time in sports and part of my time in entertainment and, quite frankly, they come together for me. I'll give you an example - when I went to Reebok everyone was concerned that the company was kind of stalled - Nike was coming up on one side with Performance L.A. Gear on the other side with casual products, etc. and everyone was terrified that the industry was saturating. And, of course, we went to very differentiated product, which is exactly what this industry needs to go to, so the product doesn't look the same, particularly on the sports side, because it is all starting to look the same. Differentiate the product, make it innovative and exciting again, so that when you open the package there is always the element of discovery and surprise. At the same time, start to move towards consumer products, heavy advertising and promotion to go after consumer share of mind. That's my background - kind of relevant ...

WIZARD: That's interesting. I started out as a sports card collector. When I was up at school, there was always something to read about as far as the baseball cards were concerned - what was happening. But my parents used to send me a stack of comic books and I didn't know what the heck was going on in the industry. So, I know, this magazine took off because of the sports cards taking off. It worked out really well.

O'Connell: You're so well positioned. We're starting to see, and I hope we're going to be part of making it happen, an explosion on the entertainment side.

WIZARD: I truly believe it's going to happen.

O'Connell: We can see that the sports side is getting so difficult. You have all the licensing rights issue problems now between the leagues and the players' associations. So many licenses have been let. It's very hard to control the marketing of a product. You're fighting share, not going after growth. The entertainment side is different. They're much more wide open.

WIZARD: Also all the international markets now are opening up.

O'Connell: That's a great point. When you get into the entertainment side you've got a much broader world-wide awareness of a lot of those properties than you do of sports. Sports are carved up country by country.

WIZARD: The entertainment, I feel, has a more world-wide appeal because of the American culture. Is that something you're going to pursue?

O'Connell: Absolutely. The other thing that's intriguing to us, which I'm sure is like you with your magazine, is that trading cards are a medium that belong to kids. Videos and everything belong to adults. Trading cards belong to kids. It's their medium to communicate with them in.

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SPAWN

HIS CREATION, IN AND OUT OF COMICS...

by Patrick McCallum

Todd McFarlane. Jim Lee. Rob Liefeld. Whilce Portacio. Erik Larsen. Marc Silvestri. Jim Valentino. Those names signify the dawn of a new age of comics, where the individual creators have total control over their creations, and are free to be their own bosses. What makes Image Comics so promising is the power Image's creators have to create awesome comics, now with fresh new characters. Most of them are at the peak of their careers, and have incredible sales potential.

Image's first project, *Youngblood*, set a sales record of 600,000 copies—more than any non-Marvel or DC comic has ever sold. Not a bad start.

Out of all the artists in Image's stable, one of their heaviest hitters is Todd McFarlane. Best known for his work on the Spider-Man character for Marvel Comics, Todd has since become one of the biggest names in the industry. Fans were always begging for more of his work, but Todd had quit after *Spider-Man*'s 16th issue. Now, close to a year later, he's back.

His new project is *Spawn*, and by the looks of it, *Spawn* may be his best work to date. The story starts with the untimely death of Al Simmons. Now Al is, not surprisingly, pretty upset at being dead. Desperate to return to the land of the living, Al makes a deal with the devil. In exchange for his soul when he kicks the bucket a second time, Al receives a new lease on life. That way, he believes, he can rejoin the wife he loves so very much, and lead the rest of his life to the fullest.

WRONG.

Oh no, don't get me wrong. The devil keeps his word and Al is brought back to life, but there's a couple of catches to the deal. First, it's five years after his death, his wife has remarried, and the world has moved on. Simmons is back all right, but in a world that has no use for him. To top it off, Al also now possesses fantastic new powers. Powers that enable Spawn to fly, grant him super speed, or even topple a skyscraper. But the more good he does, the sooner he begins his journey to the one who granted him those powers.

So how does Spawn survive? Everything he lived for is gone, and by using his amazing powers he brings himself closer to eternal damnation. So what do you do when you have no reason to live and an even greater reason not to die? Well, read *Spawn*, and see what he does.

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SPIDER-MAN

30 Years of Web-Slinging
by Patrick McCallum

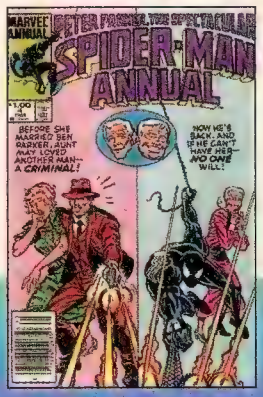
Thirty years ago, a tiny black radioactive spider changed the face of the comic world. Well, not all by his lonesome. He had a little help from a shy young man by the name of Peter Parker, who, thanks to the bite of that little bugger, gained incredible powers, powers he used to fight crime as Spider-Man. But Peter Parker was just as responsible for his costumed alter ego's success as Spidey. Here was your average Joe, who spent just as much time worrying about his troubled personal life as he did battling super-powered bad guys. Spidey was a fictional character who had a real life. He was unpopular and picked on at school, girls wouldn't give him the time of day, and he seemed to live by Muphy's Law: Everything that could go wrong, did. So then why did this two-time loser become such an overnight success? Why did fans of all age groups thrill to the web-slinger's wondrous exploits? Why? Because he was like you and me--human. He didn't have a million bucks or a secret headquarters under his mansion, he couldn't leap tall buildings in a single bound, or any really fantastic stuff. Sure, he could stick to walls, but that was more low key, more realistic. Anybody could relate to Spidey, and when you read an issue of his series, it's more like reading a chapter of his life than simply reading a comic book. Instead of simply thrilling to his adventures, you cared about his quiet moments as well.

Okay, so if you started to read Spidey, his true-to-life exploits would get you hooked. But why would you pick up a copy of his book for the first time? Simple. He looked so cool. In an age where ever single superhero had costumes with their chins hanging out, Spidey was in a class all by himself. When you first catch a glimpse of the web-head, not only are you drawn to his eerie, almost sinister name, but to his look as well. No broad shoulders or majestic cape here, just a blue and red web pattern costume that covers him head to toe, giving him an almost inhuman quality.

So we can identify with him, and he looks really cool. What other pieces are there to the Spider-Man puzzle? Time. Unlike most comics, time actually seems to pass, albeit slowly, but it passes nonetheless. Peter ages, graduates high school, goes on to college, events come and go, etc., etc. So while you read the individual comics, you get the impression you're reading chapters of some great novel, one that started this grand tale and is in the process of following his many adventures.

As the saying goes, behind every great man, there's a great woman, and it holds true here as well. Spidey's life involved *many* great women. As soon as Peter entered college he went through babes faster than Captain Kirk. His first girlfriend was a young lady by the name of Mary Jane Watson who, through an on and off relationship, eventually ended up marrying our hero. In-between MJ's and Peters roller-coaster romance, Peter hooked up with Gwen Stacy, who met an untimely end at the hands of the original Green Goblin; Betty Brant-Leeds, who never really became more than a good friend; Deb Whitman, who had more personal problems than we can fit onto these pages; and Felicia Hardy, who led a double life as the cat burglar known as the Black Cat. Of course, second in importance only to the present Mrs. Parker is Peter's Aunt May, who raised him as her own child when Peter's parents were killed in a plane crash. (As of this writing, it remains unknown if they are truly dead. Rumor has it that *Amazing Spider-Man* #365, on sale now, reveals that their deaths were faked and they have been working under deep cover for the C.I.A. Go figure.)

Actually, his entire supporting cast is pretty awesome. When the story isn't focusing on Peter in or out of his Spider duds, we can check in on any one of the colorful and intriguing people that fill Spidey's day to day life. There's J. Jonah



Jameson, owner and publisher of the *Daily Bugle*, a newspaper that's built a reputation on slandering Spidey. The odd part is that Peter Parker makes a living for himself by taking pictures of Spidey in action, which he pulls off by positioning his camera and setting it on automatic as he does a little T.C.B. as Spider-Man. Then there's Flash Thompson, who tormented young Parker back in the days when they went to the same high school together. All is forgiven now, as Flash and Peter are best buds. Harry Osborne was a college friend of Peter's who has more problems than you could imagine. Harry's dad, Norman Osborne, was the original Green Goblin and was killed in battle with Spider-Man. Harry himself has a long history of mental problems and drug abuse, and has since become an all new incarnation of the Goblin. The most important of his male supporting cast is his Uncle Ben, who died way back when Spidey premiered in the pages of *Amazing Fantasy* #15. He may not have been around long, but the values he taught Peter as he grew up is what made Spider-Man the man he is today.

There's an old saying, "You can judge a man by his friends," which is mostly true. But in the comic books, your enemies boost your sales as well, and boy, does our web-slinging buddy have his villains. In a rogue's gallery that is without equal, some of whom are real heavy hitters. One of the first was the original Green Goblin, the aforementioned Norman Osborne who was subjected to a mysterious green formula which strengthened his body, yet twisted his mind. Donning a grotesque goblin-like costume, he discovered Spider-Man's true identity, and made his life a living hell. Doctor Octopus was a brilliant nuclear physicist with a bad hair-cut. He was caught in an explosion that grafted four mechanical arms to his side and unbalanced his mental state, making him a dangerous opponent. The Sandman, while on the run from the law, found himself caught in an explosion near a beach, and awoke to find his entire body composed of living sand, making it almost impossible to hurt him, yet allowing him to pummel Spidey with fists of stone. The Kingpin, A sumo-sized godfather of the Marvel Universe, was as corrupt as can be, and always came out smelling like a rose. The Hobgoblin picked up on the deceased Green Goblin's technology, and became almost as big a threat as his predecessor. The biggest threat Spidey ever faced was a villain introduced at Spider-Man's 25th anniversary, five years ago. Combining the living alien costume Spider-Man acquired on a distant world with an ex-journalist bent on Spider-Man's death, Venom is the toughest, deadliest, most powerful foe Spider-Man has ever faced.

Any one of the reasons given for Spider-Man's success would make any superhero a "good" character to read. By combining all these strong story and character ideas, you get a character who has consistently been one of the industry's most popular mainstays for over 30 years. In short, a lot of time was invested and a lot of hard work went into insuring that Spidey would even be around for a 30th birthday celebration. So for all of the artists, writers, colorists, letterers, editors, and for every one of you who has spent a part of your lives chronicling the adventures of the wondrous wall crawler, let's hope the birthday cake is really, really big because you all deserve a slice.

SPIDER-MAN ™ & © 1992 Marvel

Lunch with MARVEL COMICS

All of Marvel's secrets have been revealed over lunch...

We thought it would be fun to have lunch with a few of the guys from Marvel's sales team and just chat. We were joined by Lou Bank, Director of Direct Sales. "Remember - he's a double director. You can't really top that," joked Bruce Costa, Sales Manager, who was also present. Joining us was Skip Dietz, Head of the Marvel Co-Op Program, Sales Manager and Catalog Coordinator, and last but not least, Editor/Writer Extraordinaire, Fabian Nicieza - who dared us to produce at least one issue without using the word "hot". I would give it a shot, but he said the "H" word just now. Maybe next issue.

Now it's on to lunch - let's see what ensues.

First question: Rumor has it that Marvel has signed plans to build a Marvel World similar to Disneyland. Any comment? "In your backyard, Gareb," retorts Fabian. "I'm also trying to figure out where the rumors that Peter David is writing *X-Force* started--magazines like *Wizard*?" It seems like Lou, Bruce, and Skip will be the only cooperative ones here.

Next question, directed to Lou: Any plans for crossovers with other publishers? "Fabian loves when fans beg, so I'll have to say no. Actually, as far as I know probably not, but we do have some large crossovers coming up, which mix some licensed characters with some of our characters, sort of like seeing that Alf vs. Wolverine you always wanted." Follow up: What's going to be Marvel's big monster hit this summer? In 1990, it was *Spider-Man;* in 1991, it was *X-Men;* now summer 1992, what's it going to be? Lou replies that he has his own ideas, but passes the question to Fabian. Fabian takes a chunk of chewed chicken out of his mouth to question the use of my word monster. He thinks the question is loaded, and that monster implies a "negative connotation and automatically places us on the defensive." Skip attempts to voice his opinion that Marvel is trying to do a lot of big projects rather than one huge one. Yet, by the second course everyone concurrs that the *Cable* limited-series will be the big summer hit, with *Spirits of Vengeance* kicking off the summer heat.

This is where Fabian reveals his big announcement that he will be drawing Spider-Man starting this fall. He's tired

of just being able to write. "I want to be able to draw the stories." He will be adding two new characters - Stick Man and Circle Boy. I saw some sketches for these two. They're still a little rough, but they look awesome.

Next question: Any big licensing pushes this year? "The *X-Men* cartoon in September will create an avalanche of licensed products that'll lead to lots of stuff," replies Lou. Bruce immediately jumps in and fills us in on some cartoon plots. "It's very continuity-bound. The Beast spends the first six episodes in jail. They try to attack Trask." At this point Bruce's 3rd course arrives, looking like something out of "Old Man and The Sea." Not a nice filet or what not, but a whole fish just plopped on the plate coated in some mutant sauce. Needless to say, we all had some type of rude comment. Bruce whimpers "Why do I feel like a killer?"

Lou finishes the answer by mentioning the release of a few new video games tying into the cartoon, new *X-Men* toys, and some awesome ties from Nicole Miller. Follow up: Will there be another Platinum *Spidey* type giveaway for retailers. "There actually will be an *X-Men* Premium," Lou adds. The cover to *X-Men* #1 E as a full hologram the length of the height of a sideways comic book. It will be allocated to retailers based upon the number of *X-Men* they bought.

Next question: Now, I've had a few people come up to me after I told them about my lunch date with you guys and they really want an answer to this question. Are you ready? A unanimous "Yes" is heard loud and clear, so I continue: With all the hype over the two years with *Spider-Man* and *X-Men*, many fans have complained about the decay of the older favorites like *Iron Man, Fantastic Four* and *The Avengers*. What are your plans with them? Lou takes this one. "*Galactic Storm* did this for the Avengers titles. Also, we've got milestones for *Thor*, *Hulk*, and *Iron Man*, where we're killing Tony Stark." Fabian gets up to leave, disgusted that Tony Stark is being killed. Besides, he has to finish up some "hot" books. Skip continues, "The Fantastic Four will be the lynchpin characters in the Infinity War as the heroes gather around Reed Richards. Something big is going to happen in *Thor #450* - something really big. Bigger than both Bruce's fish and Fabian's ego."

"So, any more questions?" asks Lou.

Who's going to be working on all the X-Books? Skip volunteered the info. This year's big X-Project yet will cross over into all the mutant titles."

Though the storyline isn't 100% nailed down, we did manage to get a checklist of the issues involved and the respective creative teams:

Part 1
Uncanny X-Men #294
Joe Quesada/Scott Lobdell

Part 2
X-Factor #84
Larry Stroman/Peter David

Part 3
X-Men #14
Andy Kubert/Fabian Nicieza

Part 4
X-Force #16
Greg Capullo/Fabian Nicieza

Part 5
Uncanny X-Men #295
Joe Quesada/Scott Lobdell

Part 6
X-Factor #85
Joe Quesada/Scott Lobdell

Part 7
X-Men #15
Andy Kubert/Fabian Nicieza

Part 8
X-Force #17
Greg Capullo/Fabian Nicieza

Part 9
Uncanny X-Men #296
Joe Quesada/Scott Lobdell

Part 10
X-Factor #86
Larry Stroman/Peter David

Part 11
X-Men #16
Andy Kubert/Fabian Nicieza

Part 12
X-Force #18
Greg Capullo/Fabian Nicieza

Finally, the check arrives and Lou snaps it up. I guess we should have called this, "Lunch *On* Marvel."

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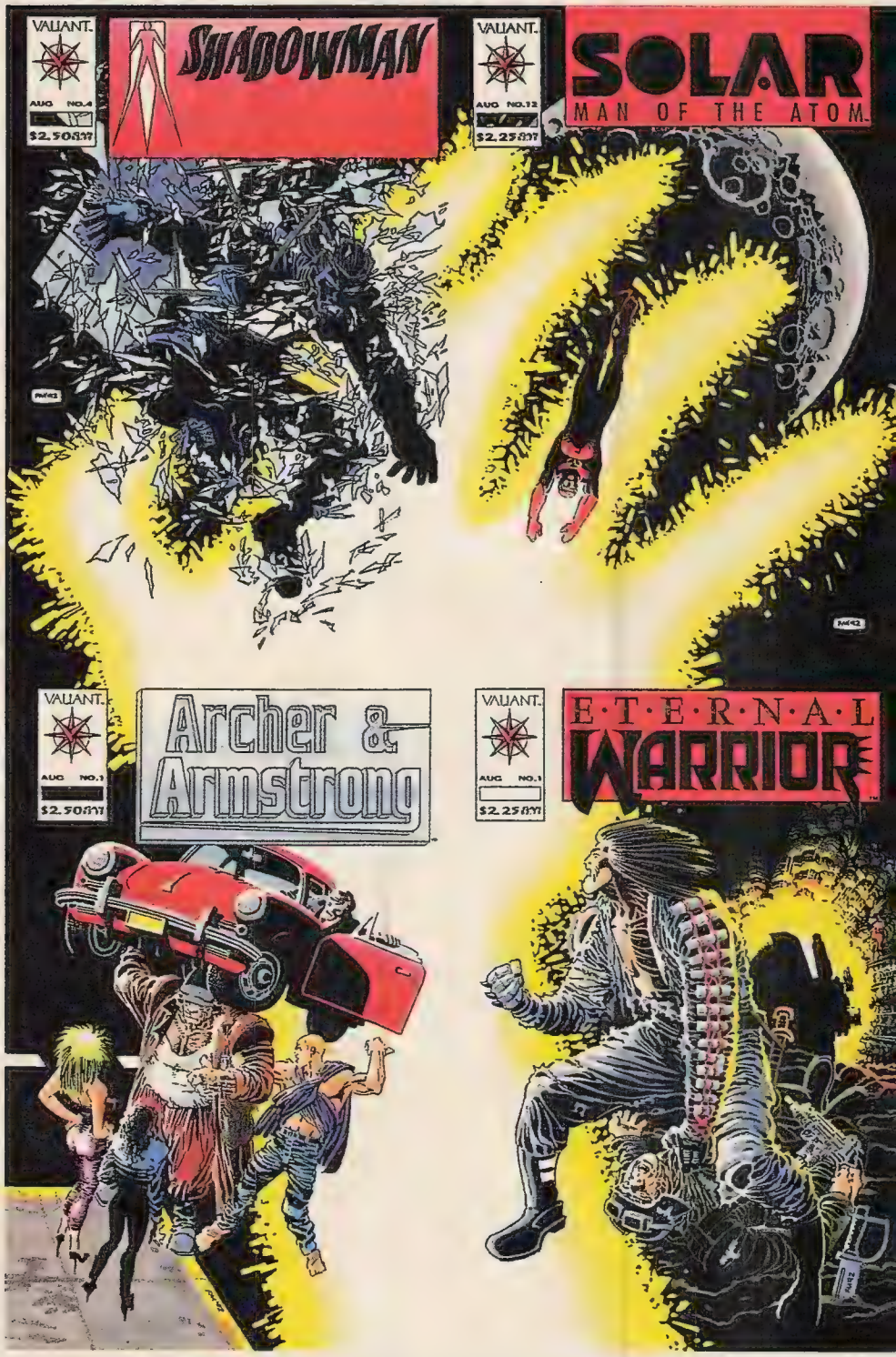
UNITY™ Chapter 6
Shadowman enters UNITY and battles Solar!

UNITY™ Chapter 9
The secret history of Erica Pierce!

MAY



UNITY™ Chapter 3
The oddest couple in UNITY finagles a shot at the Mothergod!

UNITY™ Chapter 2
The ORIGIN of the Eternal Warrior *and* Armstrong, of Archer and Armstrong.

UNITY™ Chapter 4
The story of Erica Pierce's last days on Earth!

UNITY™ Chapter 8
In UNITY, the kids learn that Kris is going to have a baby.

UNITY™ Chapter 5
Aric enters UNITY and battles with the Lost Land Slavers.

UNITY™ Chapter 7
Rai, Magnus and the Eternal Warrior of 4001 enter UNITY!

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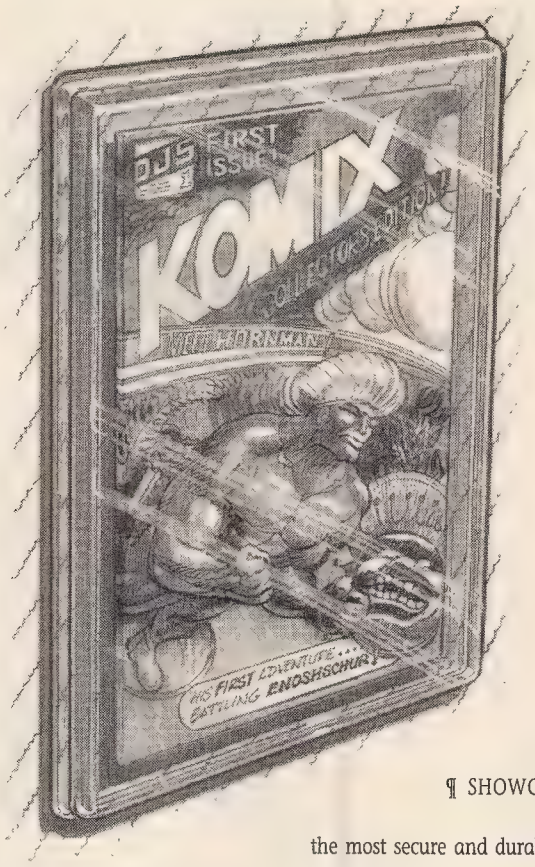

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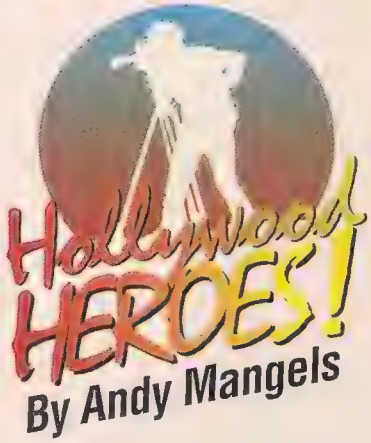
BATMAN RETURNS

ANDY MANGELS BRINGS YOU THE LATEST LOOK AT THIS YEAR'S HOTTEST MOVIE



Bat-Mania is about to grip the country again with the imminent release of *Batman Returns*. Director Tim Burton is one of the few people returning to the film but, as director, his creative vision shapes the whole picture. Tim's vision of the film was set long before the first *Batman*, as we'll soon find out! But first...

Back in *WIZARD #9*, I previewed the plot and characters of *Batman Returns*. A few things have changed since I was given that information, here's an update. Marlon Wayans/ The Kid/Robin is not in the film. At all. Nada. The part was written out prior to filming, but official press releases were never sent (or never printed) in the Hollywood trade papers, leading everyone to believe Warner was putting a snow-job on writers. Marlon can be seen in Columbia's upcoming *Mo' Money*. Also, Jan Hooks does not play "Juliet," as that character's name has been changed to "Jen," and her partner has been changed from "Punch" to "Josh." And finally, the Riddler is not mentioned at the film's end anymore.

Now, to the real subject of the column. The *Batman* that almost was and may yet be... Tim Burton's original idea for his *Batman* film. Burton was unhappy with Sam Hamm's script for *Batman II*, and brought in Dan Waters and Wesley Strick to start anew. But, as you'll see, the tone and style of *Batman Returns* may have some resemblances to the following... written seven years ago by the Burtonmeister himself! Written by TIM BURTON and JULIE HICKSON — October 21, 1985

Although this is only 43 pages long, it seemed much longer. With three acts, all overly full of bat-doings, this plot by *Batman* director Tim Burton with co-scribe Julie

Hollywood HEROES!

Hickson could well have been several movies... if it wasn't so stupid, contrived, and, well, comic-booky in the worst sense of the phrase.

Bat-historians will note that this Treatment/ Outline was turned in in 1985, quite a bit after the Tom Mankiewicz scripts, but well before Sam Hamm's script. This outline is an odd mixture of scene descriptions, dialogue, camera angles, and plot synopsis. Reading it, one feels very much as if it were written by four different people, in four different styles.

Act One, entitled "Loss," begins with a full-screen shot of the Joker laughing, before fading to Gotham City: "a little New York, a little Max Fleisher, a lot of Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*." With aerial tramways and blimps, it sounds more like *Watchmen* combined with *Metropolis* than anything else. As we switch to Gotham Municipal Courthouse. Thomas Wayne, counsel for the Subcommittee on Investigation into Racketeering, rails on against mob boss Rupert Thorne. We cut to the Waynes at home that evening, preparing for a costume party after an evening trip to the Gotham Opera's *Der Fledermaus* ("The Bat-Man"). Thomas, of course, wears a "majestic bat costume," while Martha is a "delicately shimmering fairy queen" and young Bruce is a "small whirling harlequin."

Walking home from the party, while "our hearts are melting for the uniquely harmonious family, the unthinkable happens." A Mr. Softee ice cream truck glides around the corner, and to the "insipid tinkling style music," the Waynes are gunned down. As Bruce lets loose with an "eerie, guttural, animal-like screaming of a boy in unthinkable pain," he manages to see the murderer in the truck: a 17-year old boy with green hair, white skin and a red-lipped smile!

As the police show up, Alfred Pennyworth vows to Bruce that "as long as I live, you will never be alone." Days later at the funeral, Bruce makes a solemn vow to avenge his parents' death and declare war on crime.

Act Two is called "Preparation-Transformation," and in it, Bruce trains to become Batman. He continues collecting information about Rupert Thorne, who he is sure ordered his parents' death, and, grows ever closer to Commissioner Gordon. Years later, a newspaper headline screams out "Joker Escapes Prison! Vows Revenge Against Mayor Rupert Thorne." That day, the Joker begins a "carefully masterminded reign of terror in Gotham City," which includes releasing animals from the zoo, preempting TV broadcasts, painting all the windows of Gotham's skyscrapers black, and making the subways run backwards! When the Joker pre-empts himself into the *Love Boat* (with guests Tom Bosley, Cloris Leachman, and Andy Warhol), Bruce begins to take notice. Bruce goes to his room, dons his Batman suit for the first time, and slips out a window. "The

Prince of Darkness is Born!"

In Gotham Square, the Joker is busy launching the city's Christmas tree into space, Batman shows up and they start to duel on the ice-skating rink — "punctuated by all the requisite silliness of pratfalls." The Joker gets away now, able to carry out more pranks against Gotham, including painting the entire city candy-striped colors, coercing union leaders to call strikes throughout the city, and setting off bombs. Bruce cannot track the maniac down until Joker sets off fireworks at a performance of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. There, Bruce saves the life of singer Silver St. Cloud, who is portraying Titania, the Fairy Queen.

While Bruce is spending the night with Silver, as the Joker plans to mock-elect himself Mayor and throw a parade at which several balloons will carry his special "Grimacing Gas." After the Joker uses the gas on performers at a comedy club, Commissioner Gordon establishes the Bat-Signal to contact Batman, who he's now asked to help out on the case. The Joker strikes next at a charity circus where Bruce and Silver are in attendance. There, in disguise are the Penguin as the ringmaster, the Riddler as a clown, and the Catwoman as a trapeze artist. When Catwoman pours acid on the trapeze of the Flying Graysons ("the main attractions"), John and Mary fall to their death, while young Dick miraculously survives.

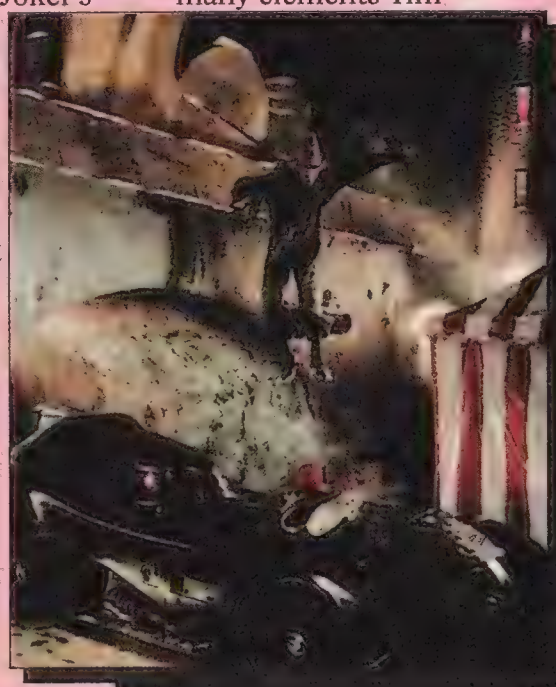
Running to the sobbing Dick's side, Bruce scoops him up and carries him to his car, promising him that "As long as I live, you will never be alone." Sound familiar?

Finally, in Act Three's "Retribution — Family," Bruce adopts Dick, the Joker dresses as the Mad Hatter and is "interviewed" by Barbara Walters (whom he's holding at gunpoint.) The Joker kills Rupert Thorne in a "mayoral" debate, then throws a parade on Christmas Eve, where "with Jokerian humor, election eve has been designed to coincide with..." When Bruce looks closer at the parade, he realizes that the Joker's hoods are wearing gas masks underneath their Mardi Gras masks. Bruce also realizes that the huge parade balloons are filled with the "deadly Grimacing Gas." A confrontation soon ensues, where the Joker and Batman are both carried aloft by the helium balloons.

When they both crash through the skylight of the Gotham City Natural History Museum, it's up to the new hero, Robin, to save Batman's life. When Batman throttles the Joker and puts a gun to his head, Commissioner Gordon arrives and puts an end to the potentially ugly scene.

The movie ends as Bruce, Silver, Dick, and Alfred open presents on Christmas day. Reaching for the last present under the tree, Bruce is shocked to see that it is wrapped in purple and green, with a clownish Jack-in-the-box face on it. As the screen fades to black, the laughing face of the Joker appears again.

What's probably most interesting about this *Batman* treatment is how many elements Tim



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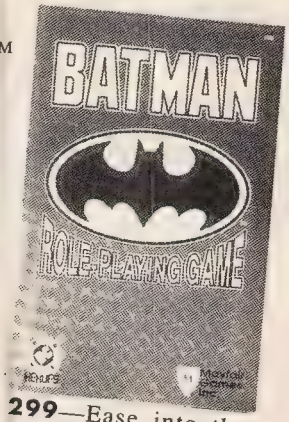

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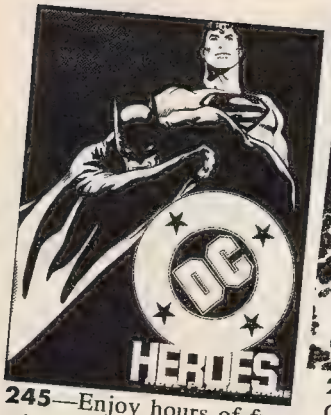

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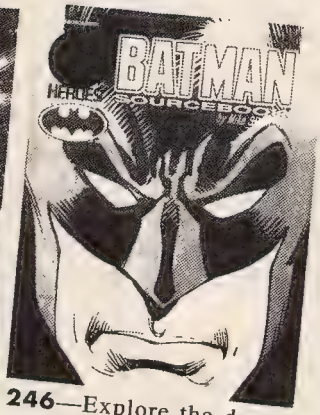

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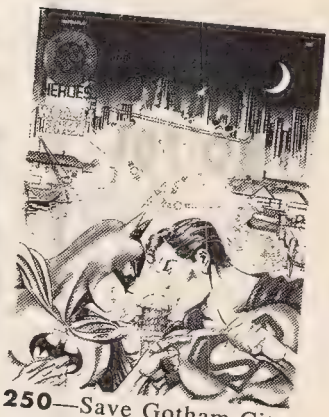

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Burton kept in his first film. Although it was Sam Hamm who reworked and used the parade-balloons/Smylex sequences, it was Burton who decided to make the young Joker the murderer of Martha and Thomas Wayne. It was also Burton who wanted Gotham to have the Gothic "Fritz Langlan" look it had in the movie (remember, this is years before *Dark Knight*). Still, despite it's Gothic city descriptions, Burton's early *Batman* was not as gothic in tone, nor as dark and foreboding. Its elements of camp and bizarre humor are unmistakable. The fact that *Batman Returns* has many similar elements to Burton's draft shows just how much control Burton wanted to wield on the project.

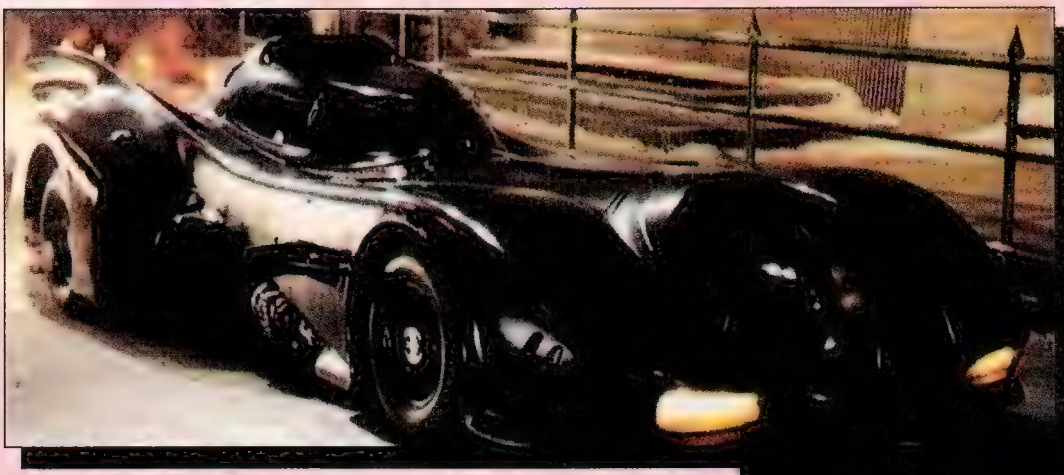
This *Batman* has many more problems than it has good points. The movie still focuses too largely on the Joker — even before Jack Nicholson was probably even discussed. Starting and ending the movie with the face of the Joker filling the screen leaves in the viewers' minds no doubt who is the star of the film. This script leads all to believe that Burton's real interest lay in exploring the Joker rather than Batman, a criticism levelled by many, after the filmed version's premiere.

Many elements of the movie make little or no sense. Penguin, Catwoman, and the Riddler pop up out of nowhere, and disappear back into the wings after their brief cameo. The Rupert Thorne business seems completely unimportant to the plot, serving only to give a completely convoluted version of the Waynes' deaths. Also, the idea that costumed villains have existed in Gotham long before Batman existed is a disturbing and somewhat ridiculous notion.

The script is full of too much business to have worked in one film; instead of a concise and clear story (as the eventual filmed version largely tended to be), we have several storylines going on at once. The Joker's various antics would be incredibly difficult to film, and, if had he done even a tenth of them, the movie would have been full of several hours of Joker jokes.

Overall, when compared to the final filmed version, Burton and Hickson's original *Batman* is a silly and trivial story — something a pair of ultimate geek fanboys might dream up on a junior high school afternoon. Thank Warner that this wasn't made into a film...or was it?

That wraps up our second Bat-spotlight. Next month, you can train your Bat-Signal here for a fabulous look at the upcoming *Batman: The Animated Series*! Plus, be here for the debut of my *exclusive* movie news column, imported over here from *Amazing Heroes*! It's a date!



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Palmer's Picks

Tom Palmer, Jr brings us a look at the hysteria of the EC horror and crime comics of the 1950s.

This month (and next month) I'm going to take a break from the usual recommendation of a specific comic or type of comic and focus on something different: history. Now before you close this magazine to avoid being bored to tears, you should realize a couple of things. Many of today's trends and styles in comics are a faint echo of the events that took place in the early to mid 1950s. The premiere comic book company at the time (in artistic terms, if not sales) was the Entertaining Comics, or EC line. Their trend-setting comics were highly literate, yet were misunderstood by the general public. The misinterpretation led to a Senate subcommittee hearing on juvenile delinquency and the founding of the Comics Code Authority. I plan to describe the background of the ECs this month, and next month I will show the impact the EC line had on the comic industry.

Back in 1933, Max C. Gaines and Harry I. Wildenberg were the first to make what is today considered a comic book. Their magazine was called *Funnies on Parade* and consisted of reprints of Sunday comics. Hundreds of thousands of copies of *Funnies on Parade* were used as give-aways for companies like Canada Dry and Milk-O-Malt. Surprisingly, the comic was a success, and Gaines decided to publish comics to be sold on newstands. Eastern Color Printing, with Max's help, published the first issue of *Famous Funnies* in May 1934 with a cover price of 10 cents.

Over time, the comic industry grew, with more and more companies and titles appearing. By 1943, Gaines was publishing comics under the name Educational Comics, with such wholesome titles as *Picture Stories from the Bible*, *Tiny Tot Comics*, and *Animal Fables*. These comics appealed to parents, but were not popular with kids. Max Gaines soon died in a tragic boating accident, and his son, Bill Gaines, took over the business with the company over $100,000 in debt.

Comic books at the time, like today, were run by trends. When one company was successful with a certain type of comic, such as crime comics or superheroes, the others followed. Bill Gaines, and his associate Al Feldstein, developed the western and romance comics of the time to add to the EC line of crime comics, with such titles as *Modern Love* and *A Moon, A Girl... Romance*. Eventually, these comics ran their course, and Gaines and Feldstein changed their remaining crime comics into horror comics: *The Crypt of Terror* and the *Vault of Horror*. With the premiere of these books, Gaines renamed the company Entertaining Comics and started a new line of comics called the "New Trend" comics. These books included a third horror title, *The Haunt of Fear*, two science-fiction comics, *Weird Science* and *Weird Fantasy*, and two crime comics *Shock SuspenStories* and *Crime SuspenStories*.

Funnies On Parade
© 1934 Eastern Color Printing

The New Trend comics contained four or five different stories, each drawn by a different artist. The quality of writing was above-average, with Gaines and Feldstein dealing with such topics as prejudice and twisted crimes of passion. EC became famous for utilizing the "O. Henry" ending, where each story would end with a twist to surprise the reader. As time went by these twists became more ghoulish and gruesome, especially in the crime and horror comics. EC was also known for the high quality of art in its comics. Each artist was given enough time to put a little extra into the rendering of each page while also being encouraged to develop his own style. This led to the recognition of such artists as Wally Wood, Bernie Krigstein, Frank Frazetta, Graham Ingels, Jack Davis, John Severin, and Al Williamson.

Gaines used the successful crime and horror comics to keep the lower-selling science-fiction and newly added war comics to the New Trend line alive. The EC line continued to grow, eventually adding *Mad* and *Panic*, two humor titles, to its line. But, by 1954, the public began to take notice of the content of the comics. The success of the New Trend comics, like other success

stories of the time, spawned many imitators. These comics contained all of the gore of the EC line, but did not match their sophisticated level of writing. The amount of violence and gore in the comics led psychologist Dr. Frederic Wertham to write *Seduction of the Innocent.* This book linked comic-book violence to juvenile delinquency through a series of disputed cases. Adding to the furor was the publication of the first issue of *Panic* by EC. This comic contained a parody of "T'was the Night Before Christmas" that angered many parents and politicians. The situation grew worse, with just about every popular magazine attacking comic books and many people holding comic-book burnings.

On April 21, 1954, a congressional investigation was launched, with Gaines and Wertham as the star witness. Nevertheless, the hearings did not bring about any legislation, nor did they settle the clamor over the level of violence in comics. Gaines decided to act before any actual laws were passed and gathered his fellow publishers. The publishers decided to ban horror and crime comics and form the Comics Magazine Association of America. Gaines walked out of the meeting, stating that it was not what he had in mind. The group went on to write the Comics Code as a form of compromise with the distributors. Only comics with the code seal would be allowed to be sold on the news stands. Gaines sought to circumvent the code by discontinuing the New Trend comics and starting the New Direction line. These comics would deal with such tame topics as journalism in *Extra!*, adventure in *Aces High*, *Impact*, *Piracy* and *Valor*, and medicine in *M.D.*, and *Psychoanalysis*. These comics did not carry the code approval and were faced with disappointingly bad sales. But Gaines did not give up, as he dropped all of the New Direction titles and changed *Mad* into a full-sized black-and-white humor magazine. By getting rid of the comic-book format, Gaines was able to finally get around the Comic Code Authority.

The Vault Of Horror #23

© 1952 E.C. Publications

Mad was an instant success, and is still being published today.

With the publication of the first full-sized *Mad* in the summer of 1955, the EC line came to an end. Through the efforts of politicians and horrified parents, an important trend in comics was halted through the implementation of the Comics Code. Although somewhat downplayed, the code is still in effect today, as a reminder of the hysteria of the '50s.

RECOMMENDED READING

If any of the events or people mentioned intrigue you, the following books go into much more detail:

From Aargh! to Zap! - Harvey Kurtzman's Visual History of the Comics—An 11"x15" book that serves as an over-view of just about every aspect of comics. This should be in the art section of your local bookstore.

Completely Mad—written by Maria Reidelbach. A complete history of *Mad* from comic book to magazine, which should also be available in bookstores.

The Mad World of William M. Gaines—A biography of William Gaines by Frank Jacobs which should be in your local library or a second-hand bookstore.

My Life as a Cartoonist—Harvey Kurtzman's autobiography should be in larger bookstores or smaller second-hand bookstores.

The Complete History of Marvel Comics: Five Fabulous Decades of the World's Greatest Comics—A complete and thorough history of Marvel by Les Daniels containing rare photos and illustrations. Should be available in any bookstore.

Seduction of the Innocent—The original edition of this book is extremely rare and is very difficult to locate. Kitchen Sink Press plans to publish a new version with an introduction and annotations by Wertham's biographer, James Jeibman, sometime soon.

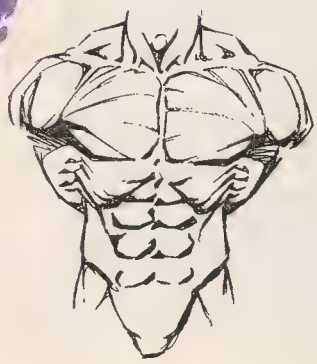
Next Month: I'll take a closer look at the actual artists involved in the creation of some of the EC comics and explore how they have influenced the artists of today.

BRUTES & BABES

DRAWING POWERFUL COMICS WITH BART SEARS

Hi, welcome to the second installment of Brutes and Babes. I'm glad to have you back here with me again, there's a lot more to do. This month, we're going to look more closely at the torso, the masses that we use to construct it, how it bends and twists and how to finish it off clearly, cleanly and correctly. So sharpen your pencils and...let's get to it!

The torso is the heart of any good figure drawing. For a superhero, the torso has to appear strong and muscular, yet flexible enough to twist that hero out of the way of even the most lethal death blasts. Right now, let s take a look at a heroic male torso.



The most popular, most powerful and easiest to draw view of the torso is the front view. I ve illustrated this view here in both a finished style and in the underlying bubble style of structuring that we explored last month.

Let s pick apart the structure first. Notice the almost egg-shaped bubble underneath it all; this is the all-important rib-cage. Study the relationship of all of the other bubble shapes to the rib-cage. Notice how the pectorals, or chest muscles, overlay it like two huge slabs; how the stomach washboard muscles cut up into it; how the two external obliques (the two small side muscles on either side of the stomach and below the rib-cage) seem to cradle it. Notice the ball of the shoulders, how high they ride on the chest and the cutting V-shape of the two large back muscles (the latissimus dorsi or lats) as they slope from the middle of the shoulder to the bottom of the rib-cage.

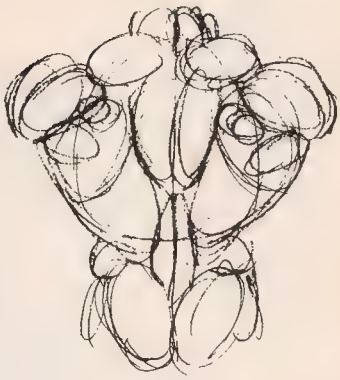
Now look at how all those bubbles translate into a more finished drawing. Look at how things are angled, creating a look of chiseled strength and hardness of form not present in the bubble torso. You ll notice in this drawing, as well as in many other drawings I ve done that a lot of the linework is broken, the muscles aren t completely outlined, letting the eye fill in the gaps, creating a flow and movement to the musculature that is usually absent from a more outlined, less organic finish.

Look at the bubble side torso pencilled above. See if you can pick out the muscles and shapes from the front view in this drawing. Notice how they changed when looking at them from the side. Try to picture the front view above in your mind, then picture it turning slowly to this side view... It s important to build a clear 3-D picture in your head of a figure's proportion and anatomy to draw it correctly from the many different poses and angles called upon in the drawing of even one comic book. For now, try to picture the 3-D shape of the pectoral in your mind... now try it with all of the different bubble-muscle shapes.

When you re drawing a side view, keep in mind the slopes I ve indicated above. These slopes represent the spine, which is curved in everyone.

The Back...the poor back is probably the most poorly drawn part of the body in comics. I groan every time I pick up a comic and notice someone abusing this exciting, powerful, potentially super-muscled piece of anatomy. I m not talking about it being badly drawn, it s just that the back can and should be as massive and thick with muscles as say the chest, shoulders and arms. Okay, enough of that...

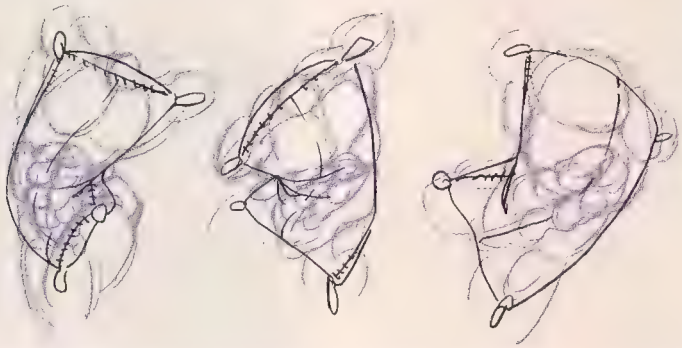
Look at the bubble drawing to the above right, you can probably just make out the lightly indicated important rib-cage underneath all of the other bubble masses. The back is a little tougher than the front or side, the bubbles are a little harder to place. Notice the M-shape printed over the back drawing. It is from this M, seen in the middle of the back, that you position your bubble shapes. Now picture that side view in your 3-D head and turn it until it becomes the back view. Understand the slab shape of the lats; the mirror L shape of the two trapezius (the two L shaped muscles that start in the middle of the back and continue upward, spreading, becoming the two almost football-shaped bubbles that straddle the spine and sit on the top of the rib cage).



Look at Brute here flexing. Be aware the muscles of the back move with the arms as well as the torso!

The hardest trick to drawing a powerful torso is correctly bending and twisting the body. You have to be sure to bend the body, to create tension and dynamics, but not to bend the body so far as to put your poor hero into traction. Look at the potato sacks drawn here. I ve borrowed this method of bend and twist from animation because I feel it s one of the most fluid and successful methods, as long as you control yourself, keeping an eye on proportion and adhere to this rule *never bend the shoulders to an angle of more than 45 degrees to the hips in any direction.*

Study the way the bubble masses have been drawn with the potato sacks and cross-reference them with the torso views on the first page.



Printed above are two drawings from *Justice League Europe* #24, inked by Randy Elliott. Look at how the potato sack method applies. It works. Try drawing sacks over your comics at home (on tracing paper).

JUSTICE LEAGUE EUROPE ™ & © 1992 DC Comics

We re running short on space this month so my tip will be a short but very sweet one. If you want to draw comics, then draw! Not just now and again, but every waking, conscious moment. Become addicted to drawing. Draw, draw, draw!

Now it s your turn! Show me what you can do! Send some examples to me, here at Wizard--I m looking forward to hearing from you. That wraps up this segment of Brutes and Babes. Be here next month, it s going to be HOT! Till then, *keep drawing!*

Send your artwork to...
Brutes & Babes
Wizard Press
P.O. Box 648
Nanuet NY 10954-0648

BOWE & BOARD
Scottsdale, Arizona
(602) 391-3826

ORIGINAL ART BY...

* Ron Frenz (Thor, Spiderman)
* Erik Larsen (Savage Dragon, Spiderman)
* Paul Mounts (Marvel Special Projects, Graphic Novels, Posters, Trading Cards & Toys)
* Marc Silvestri (Cyberforce, Wolverine, X-Men)

PAUL MOUNTS' ORIGINAL COLOR ART FROM THE JIM LEE X-MEN TRADING CARDS!!!

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Wizard's
HUNK
of the month...

Captain America

Wow. Cap can save my butt from those goose-stepping Nazis any day. He may be a little old fashioned and his ideals may seem out of date, but this sentinel of liberty (and hunkness) is still the hottest piece of pre-WWII beef that can sling a shield. That muscular bod, blonde hair, blue eyes...it's enough to make you almost want to don that stupid red and blue outfit and call yourself Bucky, just to see Cap's buns in action. Yum! To see more of Cap, check out the pages of *Avengers* and his own monthly series. With blonde hair and blue eyes and buns that won't quit, Cap's a definite 10 on the hunk-o-meter.

Wizard's
BABE
of the month...

Boom-Boom

BoomshackalackalackaBoom! NICE little bikini there. Geez, seeing Tabitha this way, it's no wonder she got the nickname Boom Boom. She may have the biggest mouth in the world, but in light of her other...assets, we're more than willing to put up with her wise cracks and snappy answers. Hmm...wonder if the Danger Room has a "jump rope" mode? Anyway, Boom Boom can be found "time-bombing" her enemies in the pages of *X-Force* every month, as well as making every head turn her way on whatever beach she sunbathes on. Boom Boom's an 8 on the babe-o-meter (a couple more years, and she's a 10 for sure).

WIZARD'S TOP 10 HOTTEST HEROES & VILLAINS

Every month in the pages of Wizard, you see books climb up and down the charts and up and down in price. Why do they do this?

It may be a hot artist, or a hot writer, but more often than not it's the characters that turn up the steam. Wizard will show you the hottest bad boys (and bad girls) in the universe, and hope they're happy with their ratings.

CABLE ™ & © 1992 Marvel

1 *Cable:* **Maintaining his strangle hold on this and the Top Ten Comics chart, Liefeld's bionic bad boy is still king of the hill. Does anybody have what it takes to topple this giant? Apparently not. Cable can be found in the pages of *X-Force* every month as well as a two-issue mini series later this summer.**

WOLVERINE ™ & © 1992 Marvel

2 *Wolverine:* **Still at the #2 position, the adamantium-laced wildman known as Wolverine continues to be one of comicdom's hottest properties. If anybody can wrest the coveted #1 spot from Cable's bionic grasp, it's our main man Logan! Wolvie can be found every month in the pages of *X-Men* and his own monthly series.**

SPIDER-MAN ™ & © 1992 Marvel

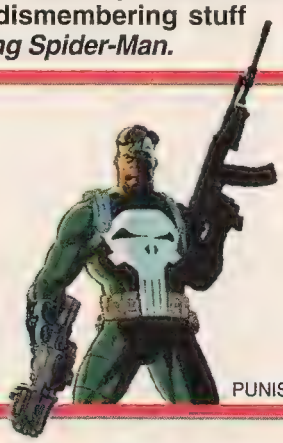
3 *Spider-Man:* **Moving up two spots from last month's charts, the amazing birthday boy, your friendly neighborhood Spider-Man is receiving tons of recognition thanks to his 30th anniversary this summer. Spidey can be found crawling through the pages of *Spider-Man, Amazing Spider-Man, Spectacular Spider-Man, Web of Spider-Man,* and *Marvel Tales.* (Whew!)**

GHOST RIDER ™ & © 1992 Marvel

4 *Ghost Rider:* **Igniting the hot charts is the Spirit of Vengeance, who has moved up two points since last month's ratings. Most of his newfound popularity can be attributed to the release of his new monthly title, *Spirits of Vengeance.* Ghost Rider can be found in the pages of *Ghost Rider, The Original Ghost Rider* (reprinting the original Ghost Rider's series), and *Spirits of Vengeance* (with Johnny Blaze).**

5 *Venom:* Venom, considered Spider-Man's #1 deadliest foe, slips a few notches from last month, but don't count him to stay down for long. Ol' dribble bib is due for a mini series later this summer, so his popularity should shoot right back up. Venom can be found occasionally dismembering stuff in *Amazing Spider-Man.*

VENOM ™ & © 1992 Marvel



6 *Punisher:* Thanks to the release of *Punisher War Zone,* with the stunning art of John Romita, Jr., the Punisher is one of Marvel's hot properties once again. This nutty vigilante can be found shooting all sorts of nifty guns in the pages of *Punisher, Punisher War Journal,* and *Punisher War Zone.*

PUNISHER ™ & © 1992 Marvel

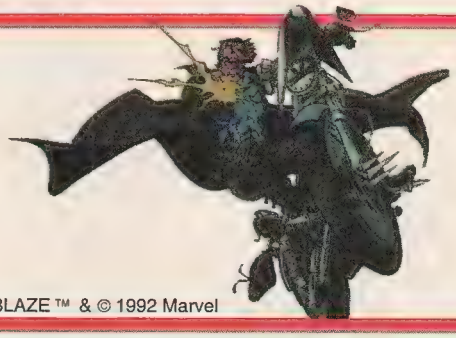
7 *Sabretooth:* Slipping a bit in the charts, Sabretooth needs a boost to help his sagging popularity. Not that he's a lame-o, it's just that he needs constant exposure to maintain his fan appeal. He can be found harassing mutants in the pages of *X-Men* and *Wolverine.*

SABRETOOTH ™ & © 1992 Marvel

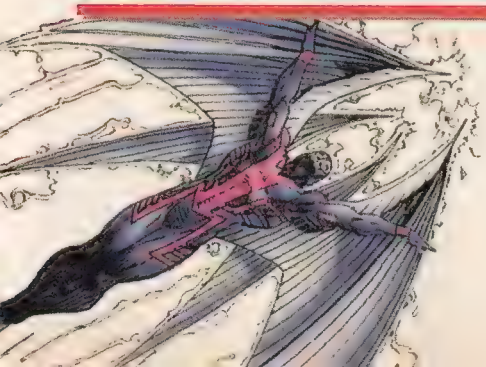
GAMBIT ™ & © 1992 Marvel

8 *Gambit:* Entering the charts in the #8 position, the controversial Cajun has really appealed to the comic fans with his flamboyant style and his wicked power to explosively charge any object. Gambit can be found melting hearts and kicking butt in the pages of *X-Men.*

9 *Johnny Blaze:* Also new to the charts is John Blaze, the original Ghost Rider. When he returned from comics limbo in the pages of *Ghost Rider,* John became such a huge hit, it led to his own monthly series, *Spirits of Vengeance,* where he co-stars with the new Ghost Rider.



JOHNNY BLAZE ™ & © 1992 Marvel



10 *Archangel:* Though slipping a few points since last month, Archangel remains a hot character thanks to his no-nonsense attitude, and his cool living wings. This wicked hero may have once been plain old Angel, but he can now be found kicking butt in the pages of *Uncanny X-Men* as the dreaded Archangel.

ARCHANGEL ™ & © 1992 Marvel

WIZARD

Captain America Annual #9

Artist: Don Hudson
Writer: Fabian Nicieza
Publisher: Marvel
Release Date: Summer 1990

Captain America #282 is the first time Jack Monroe is Nomad!

Before we tell you what's so great about this book, lets go on record for saying that this "Terminus Factor" crossover storyline is one of the dumbest storylines you'll ever read. But if it's so bad, why is it in the Comic Watch? Well, the main story may stink, but one of the backup stories features a Nomad solo adventure. Okay, so Nomad is hot. Why should this story stand out? Well, for one thing, this is a major turning point issue as Jack Monroe (a.k.a. Nomad) changes his costume from that stupid yellow and blue outfit to his cool leather "tough guy" suit, and we all know how popular these guys with big guns are. Oddly enough though, right before this story, Nomad has short hair, but when he dons the new "tough guy" outfit, his hair grows to his new shoulder length. Hmm, bad editing or weird mutant power? Whatever it is, *Captain America* Annual #9 is a good buy at its low price.

COMIC WATCH

Secret Wars #8

Artist: Mike Zeck
Writer: Jim Shooter
Publisher: Marvel
Release Date: December 1984

A *Secret Wars*, here in the Comic Watch? Sure. I know that the *Secret Wars* mini series wasn't so hot, but a major event occurred in issue #8 of that series. We all know how popular Venom is, and this is the issue that explains how he came to be. Way back during the Secret Wars, Spider-Man's costume was shredded in battle, and he uses an alien device to produce a new outfit in this issue. What he doesn't know is that the "costume" was in fact a blob-like parasite, which eventually bonded with Eddie Brock to form the sales phenomenon known as Venom. With supervillains like Sabretooth and Thanos reaching such heights of popularity (forcing all of their earlier appearances to go skyrocketing in price), *Secret Wars* #8 is definitely an underrated book. And to top it off, it's one of the harder-to-find back issues of the whole *Secret Wars* set. Go figure.

For the first full appearance of Venom, check out *Amazing Spider-Man* #300. Just chock full of good stuff.

Amazing ART

The Showcase Of Future Comic Book Illustrators Of America!

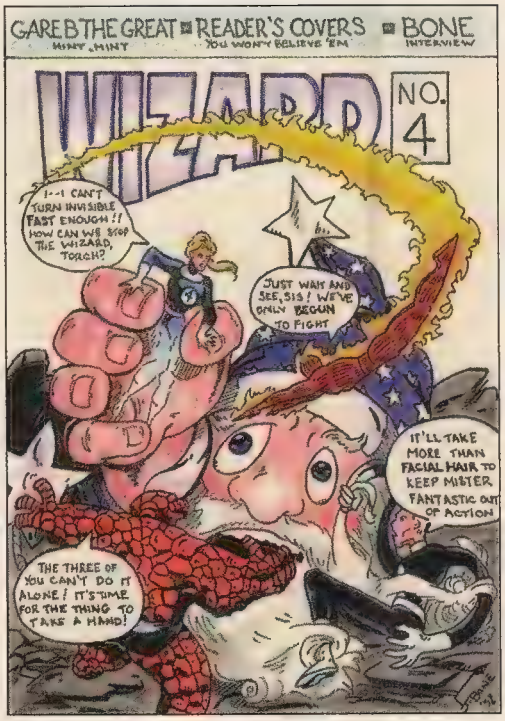
Oscar Saavedra

WOW. We've received so many great pieces of fan artwork that we couldn't possibly choose one winner each month. From now on, Wizard will show as many great covers as we can, and all the hot ones will be sent to Valiant Comics for them to look over, and who knows? One of our participants has already been contacted by a comic company looking for artists. You could be next!

All you need to do to see your work on these pages is send your artwork with your name, address, telephone number and age to:

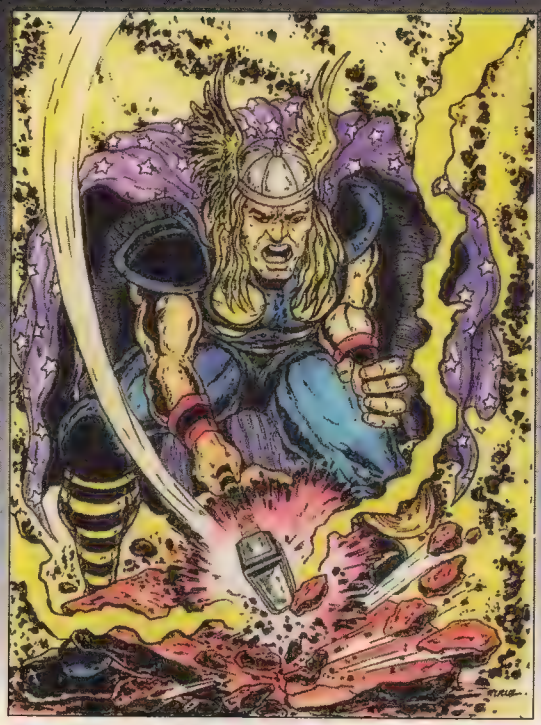
Amazing Artists
Wizard Press
P.O. Box 648
Nanuet, NY 10954-0648

Submissions can be on any form of un-lined paper or cardboard, and can be in any medium (oils, crayon, line art, etc). Artwork must not be larger than 8" x 11 1/4". Do not fold, bend or roll artwork - **mail them flat to avoid damage**. All submissions are non-returnable and become property of Wizard Press. Send yours today!



Jason Bone

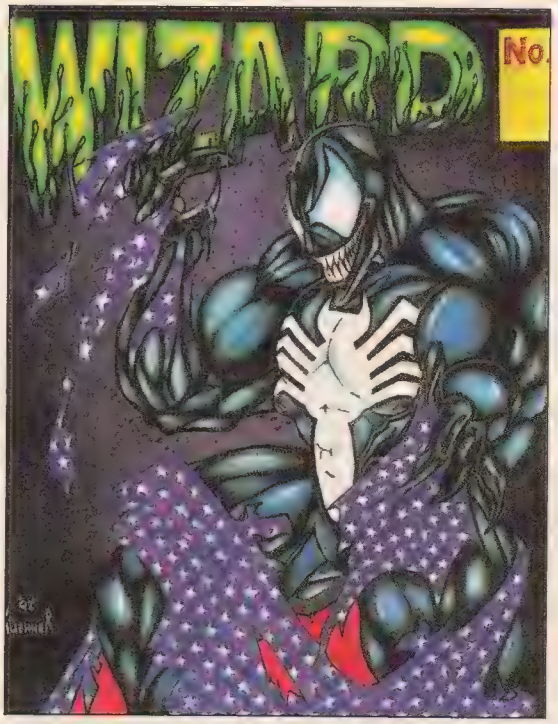
Woodstock, Ontario, Canada Age:18



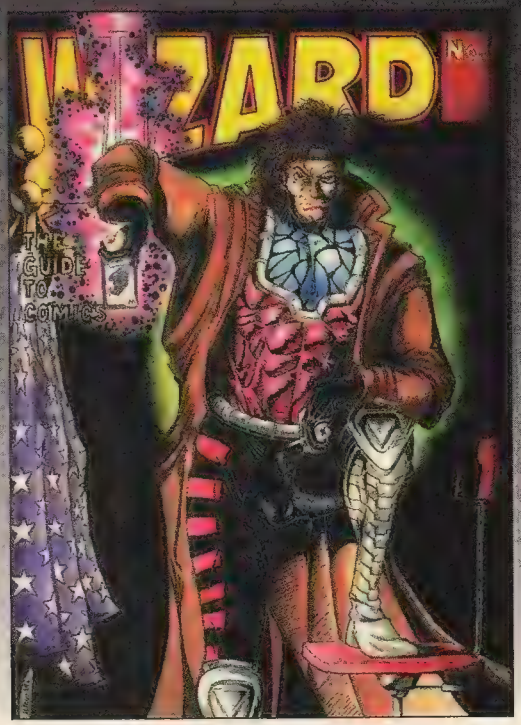
Reu C. De La Cruz
San Diego, CA Age: 32

Neil Mockford
Bromley, Kent, England Age: 18

John Haack
Schaumburg, IL Age: 18



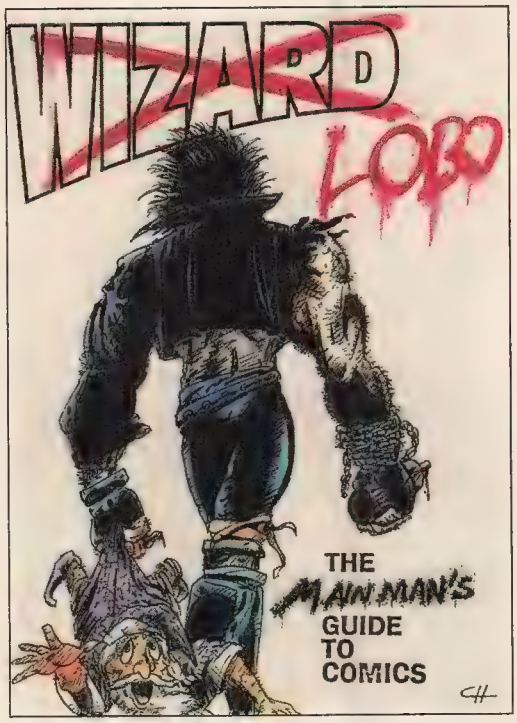
Joseph Kuehner
Katy, TX Age: 19



Mark A. Reyes
Port Lavaca, TX Age: 19

Mark W. Counts
Rainier, OR Age: 34

Jason Ling
Puyallup, WA

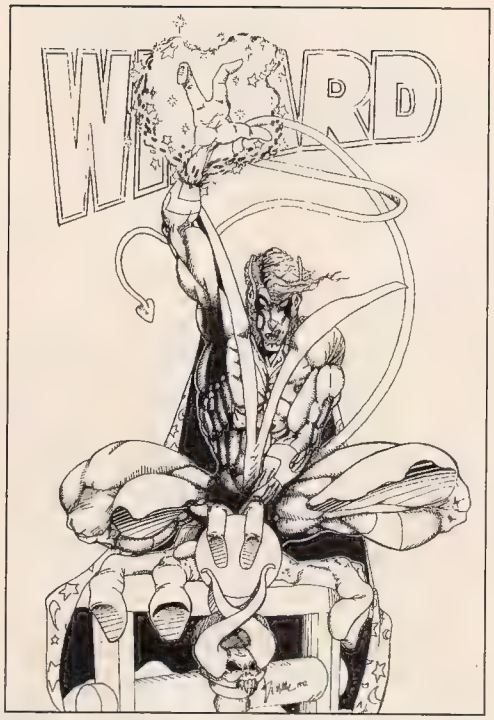


Christopher Higginson
San Diego, CA Age: 18

Darryl T. Jones
North Vernon, IN Age: 14

Paul Lesch
Clinton, WI Age: 23

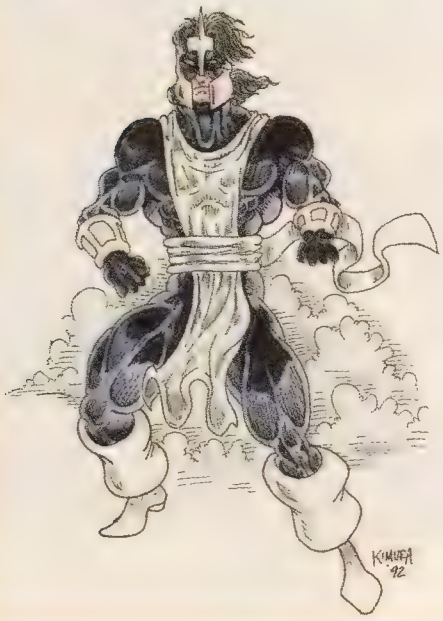
Mike Taylor
Eureka, CA Age: 17



Mark Holder & Brian Miller
Murfreesbro, TN Ages: 25 & 19

My Kind Of HERO

If making your own covers in *Amazing Art* wasn't enough for you, now you can make your own heroes in *My Kind Of Hero*! Send your best ideas (a picture, info (as seen below), with your name, address, age and phone number) to: My Kind Of Hero, Wizard Press, P.O. Box 648, Nanuet NY 10954-0648. See the bottom of page 46 for instructions on how to send us your characters. Good luck!



Shadow Chi

created by Bert "Mick" Kimura
Arlington, WA Age 21

Secret Identity: Ryo Hisao
Current Occupation: Desk Clerk at NYPD
Citizenship: United States
Legal Status: No criminal record
Marital Status: Single
Base of Operations: New York, NY
Height: 5'10"
Weight: 185 lbs
Eye Color: Brown
Hair Color: Black
Powers: Shadow Chi is a black belt in Kenpo Karate and a skilled gymnast. All of his powers originate from his mask, which he can only use while wearing. His powers include darkness control (to surround himself with clouds of black smoke), and heightened strength (enabling him to lift 2 tons), and heightened agility. He also has limited invulnerablinity, allowing him to withstand a shotgun blast with moderate damage.
Origin: His mask originates from his great ancestors who created the mystical helmet to protect them from their enemies. Originally it was worn by his great-great-grandfather Shiro, a great Samurai. Ryu discovered the helmet while cleaning his grandfather's house, after he passed away. While trying the helmet on, Ryu accidentally broke a support beam with his newly discovered strength, crashing the house on top of himself.

Ax

created by Anthony Cabrera
Mount Vernon, NY

Secret Identity: David Virile
Current Occupation: Firefighter
Citizenship: United States
Legal Status: Vigilante
Marital Status: Single
Base Of Operations: His large underground basement at his home in Mount Vernon, NY
Height: 6'5"
Weight: 310 lbs
Eye Color: Brown
Hair Color: Jet Black
Powers: Above average strenght and intelligence.
Origin: At the age of one, David and his family were stuck in an unexpected fire in the middle of the night. By the time the firefighters arrived his parents were killed and David was almost dead, but a brave firefighter risked his life by jumping out of the building with David in his hands. The firefighter was instantly killed by the impact and David was rushed to the hospital. Later it was found out that it was a pyro-maniac that started the fire. Ever since, he has owed his life to that brave firefighter by becoming a firefighter himself, and his vengeance goes out to criminals by becoming Ax.

Collecting Comics In The 90s

By Patrick McCallum

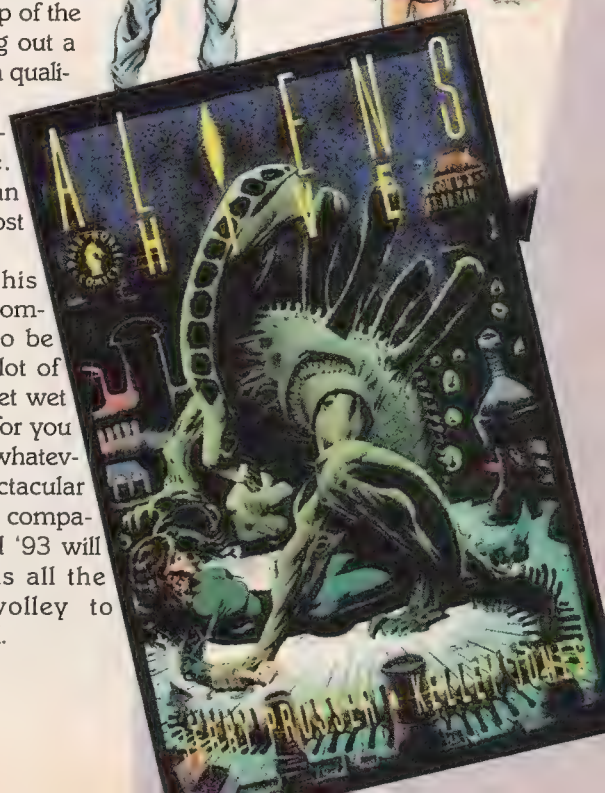
Howdy, and welcome aboard for another *Collecting Comics in the 90s*. This month, I'm gonna talk about what's happening in the comics industry. I really don't think the general public realizes what's going on in the business. Where Marvel and DC were always the Big Two and all the other publishers were crap, some pretty serious stuff is going down. First off, Marvel has gotten so enormous that they constantly control 50% of the market, and more often than not even more. The other big boy, DC Comics, is sliding down the charts quicker than you can say "this sucks." So what's going on to combat the Marvel juggernaut and take over DC's position on the charts?

There are three new companies growing in popularity which are about to split open the comics industry. First off, there's the newly formed Image Press, a sub-division of Malibu Graphics. The core of Image is formed by the likes of Todd McFarlane, Jim Lee, Rob Liefeld and Whilce Portacio. These are the guys who dominated the sales charts while they were with Marvel, and have now started their own company. They may not have the added selling power of drawing a Spider-Man or a Wolverine, but they're already poised to be a major force in the industry. Whether they can maintain their high profile remains to be seen.

Second on the list is Dark Horse. Best known for their comic adaptions of hot science-fiction movies, DH has a strong following and has proven to be a consistent source of quality storytelling and artwork. With the addition of *John Byrne's Next Men*, they've taken their first step towards a superhero universe and away from random floating stories. With the constant exposure from their high-profile titles like *Aliens*, *Terminator*, and *Predator*, they have a great springboard to become an industry leader.

Possibly the most impressive up-and-comer is Valiant, a subsidiary of Voyager Communications. They are just now truly coming under the fan spotlight. Without the aid of a team of super-hot artists, or the benefits of high profile characters like Terminator, Valiant is pushing itself to the top of the crop by simply putting out a well written story, high quality artwork and building an easily understandable universe. They have a solid fan base and have the most consistent sales.

What does all this mean? Just that the coming years are going to be very exciting, with a lot of people getting their feet wet in untried waters. So for you collectors, investors, whatever, expect some spectacular products from all the companies listed. 1992 and '93 will see a comic war, as all the industry leaders volley to become king of the hill.



WIZARD NEWS

THE INSIDE SCOOP ON THE WORLD OF COMICS

Marvel Premieres New Characters In Trading Cards

Nightstalkers, Darkhold and Slapstick to appear in Marvel Series III first

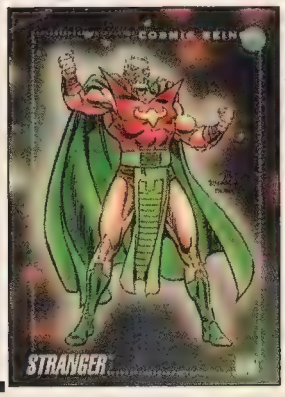
For the first time, Marvel Comics is presenting the first appearance of a character in one of its trading card sets, instead of the first issue of their comic book.

Nightstalkers, and *Darkhold: Pages From The Book of Sin*, are each getting their own regular monthly series this fall, and *Slapstick* will be presented in a four-issue mini series.

Darkhold tells the story of Victoria Montesi, Interpol Agent Sam Buchanan, and professor Louise Hastings as they deal with the return of certain lost pages of a book thought lost since medieval times. The Darkhold holds great magic of the foulest evils, and it has been the Montesi family's responsibility to keep what pages exist from falling into the wrong hands. Now that the book is resurfacing, she and her companions will have to face enemies like the evil wizard Mordred, and the followers of the elder god Cthon (whom the book was written for), the Darkholders. As part of the Rise of the Midnight Sons storyline, *Darkhold's* early issues will crossover with Marvel's other new horror titles, and a guest appearance by Ghost Rider is scheduled. The Darkhold Redeemers will appear on Marvel Series III card #144.

Nightstalkers is about three men who have sworn to destroy everything having to do with the occult, since they have been horribly hurt by the supernatural in the past. Hannibal King was once a vampire who was cured by Dr. Strange, but he can never fully recover his humanity. Blade's mother was killed by a vampire. Frank Drake's curse is perhaps the most horrible, since he is a direct descendent of Dracula himself. Together, as the Borderline Investigation Service, they seek to destroy the mystic, good or evil. As part of the Midnight Sons crossover, one of their first missions will be to use their skills and high-tech weapons to kill the Ghost Rider and Johnny Blaze. The Nightstalkers appear on Marvel Series III card #177.

Coming soon as a new humor mini-series is Slapstick. After being granted powers by the evil clowns of Dimension X, Steve Harmon now has the powers a "toon." For anyone who's never seen Roger Rabbit, being a "toon" means that Harmon can be folded, spindled and mutilated and bounce back for more, while still leading a somewhat normal life. In his mini series, he will face the menaces of Sweeny Toddler, a 10-foot killer Teddy Bear, and the vigilante Overkill. Slapstick appears on Marvel Series III card #142.

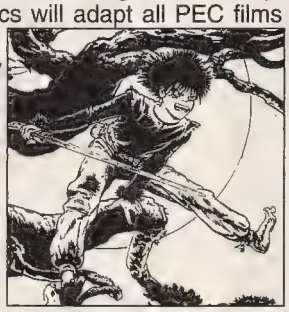


No one can say what effect having these characters appear in trading card form months before their comics will have on the collectible value of the trading cards, since this is the first time it has been done. Marvel Series III cards features an attractive new design, and are sure to be a hit with the collectors.

Raika Coming To America

Picture Entertainment Corp. and Schanes Products and Services have come together to create Sun Comic Publishing, which will be producing a wide range of products based on Japanese comic titles. The first will be *Raika*, by Yu Terashima and Kamui Fujiwara.

Raika is an Arthurian tale of magic and destiny, set in Japan. Sun Comics will adapt all PEC films to comic form. Coming soon are *The Widow Claire* by Horton Foote, *Charades* by Ruth Sacks and *Pearl Hart* by James Cahn. Look for a review of future Sun Comics projects in an upcoming issue of Wizard by Bill Schanes.



Youngblood Sells Out
Spawn Will Never Second Print

News on the success of *Youngblood* #1 has hit Image Press, and has caused a re-working of the future of that mini series.

Younblood #1 sold out so quickly that it immediately went to a second print. Issue #2 will have one complete story featuring the away team. Youngblood will be dispatched to Germany to retrive a scientist's works, and bring back the body of John Prophet. Rumor has it that Prophet may get his own mini series.

In order to expand the story presented in the *Youngblood* mini-series, the title will be expanded to a fourth issue, and an issue #0 will come out, featuring the origin of the Youngblood team, and the first day on the job for Shaft. Release dates for the Youngblood issues remain unannounced.

Youngblood #2 will also feature an introductory story to Jim Valentino's new series, *Shadowhawk. Shadowhawk* #1 is scheduled for an August release. That same month, Image will release *Extreme: The Art of Rob Liefeld.*

In other Image news, Todd McFarlane has disclosed that no issue of Spawn will ever go to a second print. Retailers must order them from their initial order forms

Simon Bisley On *Dredd Rules!*

Simon Bisley will be the regular artist on Fleetway/Quality's *Dredd Rules!* starting with Issue #10 in July. The stories will be written by creator John Wagner in a more violent tone than before, something Bisley excels at drawing.

DC Comics' New Projects
Dark Joker and *Nightwing* coming soon

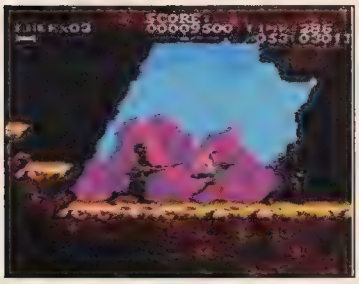
Coming later this year from DC Comics will be *Dark Joker: The Wild*, the latest in Batman's Elseworlds adventures, *Nightwing*, a four issue mini series featuring the leader of the New Titans, and *The Outsiders.*

Dark Joker: The Wild places Batman in the Medieval era of swords and sorcery. In this world, the Joker is an evil sorcerer, while Bruce Wayne's parents are magicians working for the forces of good. When Bruce is an infant, the Joker attacks and kills his parents, but not before they magically send their son away from the horrible scene of attack. After becoming an adult, Bruce vows to avenge his parents, and slay the Joker with both weapons and magic. Dark Joker will be written by Doug Moench and pencilled by Kelley Jones, the same team who created *Batman: Red Rain.*

The *Nightwing* four-issue mini series will feature major events in the life of Dick Grayson. In the opening, Starfire (Nightwing's love) is seriously hurt by aliens that wanted her to participate in the Galactic Games, and she is hospitalized. Dick Grayson is so upset, he loses control in his pursuit of her attackers. It's up to Batman to subdue, and retrain him. After learning once again what it means to be an attentive detective and super-hero, Dick Grayson adopts a new look, finds Starfire's attackers, and in the finale, proposes to Starfire. DC is scheduling the Nightwing/Starfire wedding for sometime in 1993. Nightwing will be co-written by Art Thibert and Pam Winesette, and drawn by Art Thibert.

The Outsiders are getting another title later this year, written by Mike W. Barr and pencilled by Bryan Hitch. When Geo-Force, the prince of Markovia, is framed for a crime, he is forced to go on the run. When a Lord of Vampires takes over his country, he and the team must go outside the law. He, Katana, Looker, Halo, and new members Misfit, Faust and Sanction are now wanted as criminals, with early issues guest-starring Superman and later Batman. The first and second issues of the title will be released simultaneously, either individually or bagged together with a special gift inside.

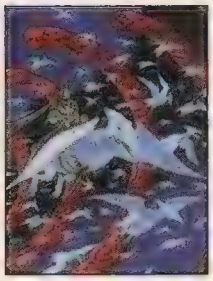
Star Wars Coming To Super NES

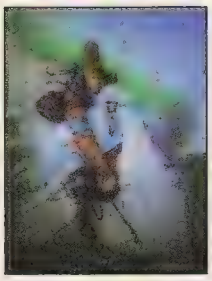


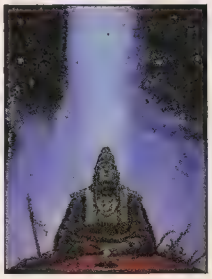
Lucasfilm Games and JVC Musical Industries, the team that introduced the 8-bit games Star Wars, Empire Strikes Back and Defenders of Dynatron City, are releasing their first Star Wars game for the Super Nintendo, Super Star Wars.

Super Star Wars will take the player beyond the limits of the film by creating aninteractive action-adventure play with mind-blowing graphics and usage of Super Nintendo's Mode 7, with incredible sound and CD-like music quality and realistic, digitized sounds.

Super Star Wars will be available this fall.







*Alien*³ Trading Cards
Coming Soon From Star Pics

The Alien is back, and it's out to destory the prisoners of Fiorina 161-Class C Unit 12037154 one by one, but not if Ripley can help it. Fresh from her hypersleep, Ripley embarks on a terrifying life or death mission to stop the xenomorph. Who will survive? Sci-fi fans will find out at the end of May when Star Pics releases its newest card set, Alien³ Collectible CardArt.

The cards will feature movie shots, behind-the-scenes cards and pre-production artist renderings. In addition, Dark Horse Comics has created a nine-card collectible subset especially for Star Pics, featuring panels of an all new Dark Horse comic strip

Also from Star Pics are the Playboy and Saturday Night Live trading card sets.

Tundra To Honor Moebius

In celebration of the 15th anniversary of Jean "Moebius" Giraud's introduction to the United States, Tundra Publishing and Starwatcher Graphics proudly present Legends of Arzach: The Arzach Gallery, a tribute by some of the biggest names in comics to the internationally acclaimed artist and his most famous creation. Each of six stunning 8 1/2" x11" "galleries" incudes eight high-quality full-color prints, each by a different artist and inspired by Moebius' Arzach character--plus a four-page episode in an all-new continuing tale of Arzach's earliest days written by Randy and Jean-Marc Lofficier and illustrated by unpublished work of Moebius himself.

Scheduled or a June release, the first collection features plates by Mike Mignola, Charles Vess, Paul Chadwick, Joe Kubert, Bryan Talbot, Wendi Pini, Katsuhiro Otomo and Willam Stout.

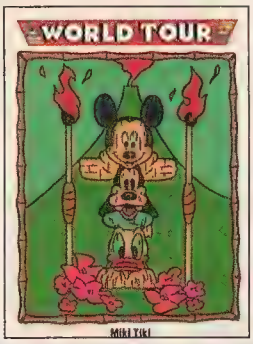
The cone-shaped hat, the white pterodactyl with it's massive wings, the long cape floating back caught in the winds of adventure. First appearing in France in 1974, Moebius' approach to Arzach imacted European comics as well as graphic novels like Frank Miller's *The Dark Knight Returns* and Alan Moore's *Watchmen,* and redefined U.S. comics in the late mid-late 1980s.

"I am incredibly grateful to all who have responded enthusiastically to this project," says Moebius. "Each artist has produced a wonderful verson of the character."

Disney Cards on Delta Airlines

SkyBox (formely Impel) announced that it's providing cards from their popular Disney Collector Cards to all children flying to Orlando on Delta Air Lines to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Walt Disney World.

The promotion, which began March 1, is expected to reach over 100,000 children. "As the 'Official Air Line for Kids,' we strive to make trips fun and interesting for our younger passengers," said Bob Coggin, Delta's senior vice president of marketing development. The cards will "help to make the already exciting trip to Orlando even more special."



The Bat Coming To Adventure

Coming soon from Adventure comics is *The Bat*, adapting the 1926 book of the same name by Mary Roberts Rinehart.

Like a bat, he chooses the late night hours for his work of homicide. Like a vampire, he selects his victims carefully, striking the nation's rich. Like a cold, calculating murderer, he kills mercilessly and leaves only one clue to his identity--a bat.

"The Bat is a story about paranoia and greed and how the two walk together," says writer Doug Campbell. Cornelia Van Gorder is rich, beautiful, and like so many of the super-wealthy, paranoid. Even after her butler and maid are killed, she still thinks The Bat was invented by those close to her to scare her into giving up her wealth.

Iron Man Dies?

Rumors are circulating that, in an upcoming issue of Iron Man, Tony Stark will die from the extreme nerve damage he received after his spine was severed by a gunshot wound he received in *Iron Man* #242. Since then, his condition has only gotten worse. If Stark dies, his longtime friend James Rhodes would again wear the armor and replace him.

Eastman and Laird Back Together

TMNT #50 Begins New Thirteen-Issue Storyline

Mirage Publishing has announced that Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird, the co-creators of the international phenomenon, the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, have reunited as a creative team to orchestrate "City At War," a 13-part story which will debut in *TMNT* #50 and reach its conclusion in issue #62. The new storyline returns the hugely successful comic book to its original narrative continuity and takes off from the climactic events depicted in issue #21 and the denouement of the "Return To New York" saga. The Shredder is dead, but the Foot Clan lives on, and the Turtles are about to discover that Good doesn't always triumph over Evil, that the palette of life is composed of more than just black and white.

"The Turtles have defeated their enemy, and all of a sudden they've lost direction in some ways," says Eastman. "Their world is changing and they need to adapt, to grow up. This was the idea we wanted to pursue once we returned to the book."

With great uncertainty, an explosive situation looming on the horizon, and effectively abandoned by their sensei Splinter, the Turtles are about to face their greatest challenge to date--how to be heroes and do the right thing in a world which neither cares nor can acknowledge their existance.

"It seemed appropriate after eight years of publishing the comic for Kevin and I to jump back to basics and celebrate the 50th issue by working on it together," adds Laird. "There were a number of unaddressd issues left over from the "Return to New York" story and our 50th issue is the ideal place to begin exploring them."

Computer Comic From PC Comix

Marty Schwimmer Reviews *Trouble at the Woz*

PC Comix has created what it describes at the "1st ever comic book for your computer," entitled Lance Stone: Trouble at the Woz. Set in the year 2091, the story features Lance Stone and his female companion Skyler with mysterious aliens in hot pursuit. However, instead of turning the page to learn what is the elusive "Lifeforce" these aliens seek, you press the cursor key to advance the story. PC Comix calls their product HyperComix, interactive electronic comic books.

Depending on how long you linger, the story's 51 frames' run-time is about a half hour. The program runs on PC compatible computers with at least 640k of RAM, VGA graphics capability and 2 megs of hard disk space. PC Comix recommends an audio board such as the SoundBlaster to get he most out of the sound effects, which includes sirens, barroom brawls and death rays. Other effects include spot animation (such as characters being vaporized). The graphics are designed to be far superior to those available through computer games.

A unique twist to HyperComix is its interactive story-line. By manipulating an instruction bar at the bottom of every frame with either mouse or cursor, the viewer can not only advance or replay frames, but can choose among different branches of the story-line. A car chase can be viewed first from the perspective of the chaser and then from the perspective of the chased. PC Comix incorporated the interactive ability to exploit the computer's advantage over comic books or animation.

Trouble at the Woz is currently available for $20 plus shipping, directly from PC Comix by calling 800-944-0181. Retail distribution is being planned, with a monthly release as a goal.

COMIC BOOK CBIQ INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT

Oh, sure. Everyone knows who Wolverine and Superman are, but how much do you really know about comics? Can you--can *anyone*--score a perfect 30?? (no fair peeking in the price guide for clues!) Answers on page 158.

How well do you fare?

score	rank
0-6	Spirit of those little hard white things you find in a hamburger
7-12	Spirit of Christmas Future
13-18	Spirit of Muffins
19-24	Spirit of Giving
25-29	Spirit of Good Will
30	Spirit of Vengeance

1) Speedy was once the junior partner of what superhero?
A) Human Target
B) Black Racer
C) Green Arrow
D) Flash

2) Which one isn't true?
A) Sinestro is red
B) Nightcrawler is blue
C) Kilowog is yellow
D) Sauron is green

3) Which of the following Valiant titles takes place in the future?
A) Magnus
B) Solar
C) X-O Manowar
D) Harbinger

4) Nova, Galactus' herald, was once whose girlfriend?
A) Johnny Storm
B) Kyle Richmond
C) Matt Murdock
D) Steve Rogers

5) In the new Terminator vs Robocop series, the Terminators are...
A) all speaking with Austrian accents
B) protecting Alex Murphy
C) trying to kill Alex Murphy
D) trying to figure out how the T-1000 did all those cool things in T2

6) Wonder Man...
A) was once an X-Man
B) isn't really alive
C) is a cyborg
D) B & C

7) Firestorm, Swamp Thing and Red Tornado...
A) were all once human
B) are all elementals
C) have all been banished from Earth
D) are all ex-JLA members

8) Dr. Doom freed his mother from Mephisto with the help of...
A) Reed Richards
B) Silver Surfer
C) Dr. Strange
D) the Beyonder

9) Max Dillon is better known as...
A) Scorpion
B) Mysterio
C) Absorbing Man
D) Electro

10) Drax the Destroyer is whose father?
A) Valkyrie
B) Dagger
C) Binary
D) Moondragon

11) Which of the following series showed the first appearance of Shamrock?
A) Legends
B) Secret Wars II
C) Contest of Champions
D) War of the Gods

12) Nimrod is...
A) an ordinary sentinel
B) pink
C) an advanced sentinel from the future
D) B & C

13) Shadowman takes place in...
A) Louisiana
B) Virginia
C) Colorado
D) Chicago

14) The Mosaic world that the Green Lantern John Stewart lives on is really...
A) Earth in the future
B) Oa
C) Vulcan
D) Thanagar in the future

15) How many times has the character Dove died?
A) once
B) twice
C) three times
D) do I hear four?

16) What do Rom and Cable have in common?
A) They're both from the future
B) They're both mutants
C) They're both cyborgs
D) They're both from another planet

17) The alien race known as The Stark received their technology from...
A) Thor
B) Captain America
C) Iron Man
D) Reed Richards

18) Galactus has been unable to consume...
A) The Negative Zone
B) The Wraith Homeworld
C) The Elders of The Universe
D) all of the above

19) Known as the "non-team:"
A) Champions
B) Defenders
C) Titans West
D) Guardians

20) The Iron Man armor used to...
A) keep Tony Stark's heart beating
B) be able to make really good coffee
C) have a nose
D) A & C

21) What prompted Firelord to come to Earth, where he battled Spider-Man?
A) He chose Spider-Man as an opponent to test his mettle
B) He mistook Spider-Man for an old foe
C) Spider-Man ridiculed Firelord and he became angry
D) He wanted a pizza

22) Who built Minion?
A) AIM
B) HYDRA
C) COBRA
D) ULTIMATUM

23) Who formed the Serpent Society?
A) Cobra
B) Diamondback
C) Viper
D) Sidewinder

24) Catwoman used to be...
A) a jewelry dealer
B) a prostitute
C) a police woman
D) a movie star

25) Which side of Two-Face's face is burned?
A) top
B) right
C) left
D) bottom

26) Who killed the Hellions?
A) Trevor Fitzroy
B) Shinobi
C) Saturnyne
D) Magneto

27) What is the scariest luncheon meat?
A) olive loaf
B) baloney (do you know what's in that stuff?)
C) tongue
D) that ham-stuff with the chunks of cheese in it

28) Galactus once had drinks with...
A) Odin
B) Eternity
C) Thor
D) Hercules

29) The Negative-Zone is...
A) pure energy
B) pure anti-matter
C) pure gamma radiation
D) pure berthold radiation

30) The Joker's real origin was told for the first time in...
A) The Killing Joke
B) The Dark Knight Returns
C) A Death In The Family
D) Batman, the movie

Word SEARCH

How good are your eyes? Try to find all the words that are hidden in the Wizard puzzle. The words appear horizontally, vertically, diagonally, backwards, and every which way. Answers on page 158. Good Luck!

1) Aguila
2) AIM
3) Ajak
4) Alf
5) Armstrong
7) Balor
8) Bedrock
9) Black Racer
10) Blob
11) Bolt
12) Cable
13) Dragonman
14) Fly
15) Frenzy
16) G'Nort
17) Hela
18) Helio
19) Hive
20) Juggernaut
21) LLan
22) Nastirh
23) Plastic Man
24) Razorback
25) Scarlet Witch
26) Shaper of Worlds
25) Spawn
26) Styx
26) Sunder
27) Valiant
28) Venus Wars
29) Viper
30) Wong
31) X-O
32) X-Ray

O	T	U	A	N	R	E	G	G	U	J	K	O	S	U
F	L	Y	G	L	L	E	L	B	A	C	A	H	S	G
R	O	L	L	K	C	A	B	R	O	Z	A	R	D	S
E	T	A	X	O	J	A	G	R	A	P	O	A	E	H
N	N	R	O	A	L	N	D	L	E	I	N	L	R	C
Z	A	L	K	O	O	E	E	R	R	E	P	I	V	T
Y	M	I	R	W	B	H	O	A	M	L	T	U	E	I
N	N	W	A	P	S	F	W	T	A	S	L	G	N	W
I	O	S	M	F	W	L	A	S	A	A	O	A	U	T
R	G	I	L	O	A	B	T	N	E	A	B	L	S	E
X	A	A	R	N	L	I	R	E	D	N	U	S	W	L
Y	R	L	R	E	C	A	R	K	C	A	L	B	A	R
T	D	E	Y	M	C	O	O	I	L	E	H	L	R	A
S	T	N	A	I	L	A	V	H	I	V	E	O	S	C
O	G	N	O	R	T	S	M	R	A	L	G	B	Y	S

Word JUMBLE

Do you really know your stuff? I mean really know your stuff? The jumbles below, when properly unscrambled, from comic relared words. Answers on page 158. Example: RODDOM ***DR DOOM***

1. RAWLAKERI

___ _____

2. LAPCAPSEDY

_____

3.ROBANDOORM

_____ _____

4. BACKLACT

_____ ___

5. LUBELEYS

_____

6. GUESNAT

_____

7. BROIN

_____

8. PALHEC

_____

9. DRAWZI

_____

10. GUNSAM

_____

11. LAORS

_____

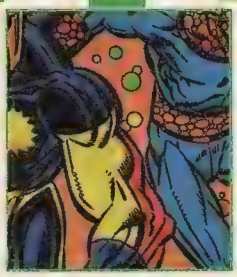
12. YEPRIL

_____

Cover SHOTS

How well do you remember your covers? Below, you will find six pieces from covers published over the last year. Can you tell what covers they are from? Answers on page 158.

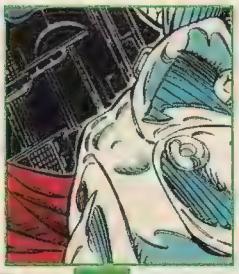
A



B

C

D



E

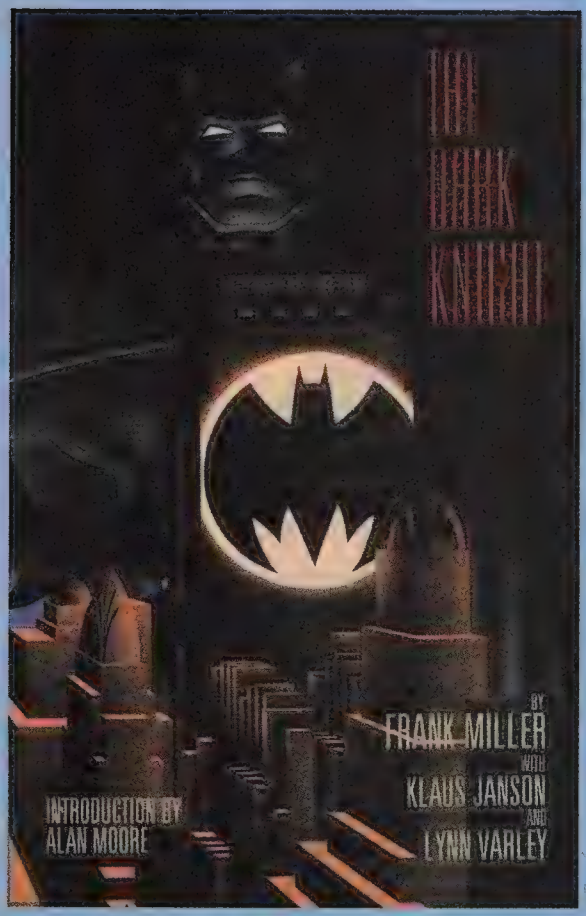
Word BREAK

Can you put together these comic book related words that have been split up into three parts? It's not as easy as it sounds, Wizard fans. Good Luck! Answers on page 158. Example: SPI DER MAN *forms "Spider-Man"*

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____
7) _____
8) _____
9) _____
10) _____
11) _____
12) _____
13) _____
14) _____
15) _____

SCAR	STRIC	TO
CAN	CU	CAT
BLACK	TER	WITCH
MID	BER	PINE
CA	TTU	LER
SHA	OS	NAUT
MAG	DOW	SUN
NIGHT	NIGHT	BALL
COL	PAN	MA
CON	CRAW	HYDE
JUG	LET	SUS
A	NE	ON
POR	RRI	TOR
BIG	GER	PINE
MIS	NON	THA

WIZARD Contest



Grand Prize:

One limited edition Dark Knight signed & numbered hardcover, signed by Frank Miller, with a Wizard Seal of Authenticity.

First Prizes (3):

A rare 2nd print *Spider-Man* #1 (Gold U.P.C. variant), or a set of *Batman* #426-429 (A Death In The Family storyline). *YOUR CHOICE*!

Second Prizes (5):

One *Arkham Asylum* hardcover, or a *Spider-Man* #1 (bagged, black cover edition). *YOUR CHOICE*!

Third Prizes (10):

A set of the *Batman vs. Predator* #1-3 (prestige format editions), or an *Amazing Spider-Man* #252. *YOUR CHOICE*!

Congratulations

to the winners of March's *Uncanny X-Men* contest:

Grand Prize:
Janice Peacock - Vidor, TX
First Prize:
Mark Knights - Rochester, NH
Greg Winter - East Greenbush, NY
Second Prize:
Jeremy Bacon - Lake Charles, LA
Randy Day - Bolingbrool, IL
Allan Dusang - Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada
Nick Nitecki - St. Clair Shores, MI
Stephen Smith - Franklin, PA

№ 11

1. God of Thunder:
2. Mrs. Spider-Man:
3. At war with the Shi'ar in Galactic Storm:
4. Slade Wilson:
5. Conan's God:
6. Venom-Spawn:
7. Morbius, The Living...

Enter Now To Win!

Official 1992 WIZARD Contest #11 Entry Form

YES, enter me in the 1992 Wizard "Dark Knight" contest for a chance to win a limited signed & numbered edition *Dark Knight* hardcover.

Name (please print clearly) Age

Phone #

Home Address

City State Zip

Store Name

Address

1st Prize Choice check one:
☐ Gold UPC *Spidey* #1
☐ *Batman* #426-429

2nd Prize Choice check one:
☐ *Arkham Asylum*
☐ Blk,bgd *Spidey* #1

3rd Prize Choice check one:
☐ *Batman vs Predator*
☐ *Amaz. Spidey* #252

Dark Knight Code:

Wizard Clue: Lots of 'em after Christmas...

Contest Rules

Answer the questions in the boxes supplied. In each answer you will find a circled letter. After you have completed all the questions, the circled letters from the answers, when unscrambled, will form the Contest Code Word. Write this word on the official entry form supplied below or a 3x5 index card.

No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, their immediate families, and Deacon Blackfire.
Print your name, address, city, state, zip code, telephone number with area code, and the name of the store where you purchase your comics, and the Dark Knight Code on an "Official Entry Form" or a standard postcard. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry individually to "Dark Knight Code #11," P.O. Box 648, Nanuet, NY 10954-0648. No mechanical reproductions will be accepted. All entries become property of Wizard Press and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state, and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winners. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes are offered. The prizes will be awarded in the name of the prize winners and are not transferable. Only one prize winner per household. Offer void where prohibited, regulated or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purpose and rules hereof.
All entries must be postmarked by July 24, 1992 and received at contest headquarters by July 25, 1992. Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected or mutilated entries.
Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. The prize winners will be selected in a random drawing from all properly completed entry forms received at contest headquarters. The random drawing will be conducted on July 26, 1992 by Wizard Press. One (1) grand prize- a signed and numbered edition Dark Knight hardcover. Three (3) first prizes- one *Spider-Man* #1 (2nd print, gold UPC) or one set of *Batman* #426-429 (winner's choice). Five (5) second prizes- one *Arkham Asylum* hardcover or *Spider-Man* #1 (bagged, black cover edition) (winner's choice). Ten (10) third prizes- one set of *Batman vs Predator* #1-3 (prestige format editions) or one *Amazing Spider-Man* #252 (winner's choice).

For a list of winners, which will be available after September 1, 1992, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "Dark Knight Winners," P.O. Box 648, Nanuet, NY 10954-0648.

Send To:
Dark Knight Code #11
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The Brat Pack

Welcome to the Brat Pack, where every month The Wizard talks with three young teenagers, Adam Kama, Mike Cecchini and Phil Colligan. Here we hope to find out what the younger kids, the heart of the comic-reading world, think of the current trends, and consider why some books make it and others don't.

Wizard: How're you doing, guys? Let me start off with a question I've heard a lot. Where do you guys get the money to buy your comics?
Mike: The Bank of Mom.
Adam: I do chores around the house, and I work a little at my dad's pizzeria. So I work for my comics.
Mike: Well, yeah, I do too. I do a couple of chores, and I baby-sit sometimes too.
Phil: Me too. A couple of chores and I babysit a little as well.
Mike: Yeah, and when chores and stuff aren't enough, I pinch a little of my lunch money.
Wizard: How do you decide what you're going to buy with the money you have?
Adam: What do you mean?
Wizard: What is it that makes you buy a comic? With the flood of specialty covers, anniversary editions and new issues, how do you judge what you buy while on a limited budget?
Adam: I buy my regular titles first, the X-line from Marvel. Those are cool and fun to read. And if a cool book with a neat gimmick, or a hot #1 comic comes in, I'll save up and buy that too.
Phil: I'm basically the same way. I'll pick up my regular books and anything that looks promising. If there's a crossover with a book I collect I'll get that, or if something big happens, like somebody gets killed, I'll pick that up too.
Mike: Same here, though I'm more willing to try new books. If a title looks interesting, and it's not in the middle of some big storyline, I'll pick it up, and if a new series starts up with an origin of a character, I'll give it a shot.
Wizard: Now you all said that you buy those specialty books, *Amazing Spider-Man* #365 for instance, because of a hologram cover or some other gimmick. More often than not, a pretty hefty price tag is attached to those things. Do you feel that you get your money's worth?
Mike: Yes and no. It's really cool to have those comics in your collection, though they usually don't have much of a story. It's kind of a rip.
Adam: Yeah, like *Silver Surfer* #50 kinda sucked. It went up in price and looked cool, but it didn't have much of a story.
Phil: I wish they would spend more time making good comics than just comics that look good.
Wizard: Okay, but if they aren't really good books, why do you guys constantly buy them, and help make such gimmick items into hot sellers?
Mike: This is a collectors market, and a book having such a cool cover is a collectable.
Phil: A good story would be a plus.
Adam: To tell you the truth, I don't expect a lot of good stories from comics anymore. I buy a small group of books, and occasionally pick and choose. A lot of the other stuff I buy is strictly for investment.
Wizard: Do you other guys buy books for investment that you wouldn't normally buy?
Phil: Yeah, and if I have enough money I buy multiple copies. I read them, though, and if I like them I would buy the book every month.
Wizard: What you said is very important. What is accomplished by these special covers is nothing more than going for the fast buck. When they attract a new reader with a flashy cover, they lose him just as fast because of a half-hearted story. Do you guys buy books you wouldn't normally buy for investment reasons?
Adam: Like I said before, I buy a lot of stuff for investment.
Mike: Me too, though I look more for good stories.
Wizard: Do you feel that the companies are becoming less and less comic-oriented and more concerned with "Let's make a buck?"
Adam: They are, and I feel myself being pushed away from comics. I would find a way to buy more comics if it was worth it.
Phil: It's a good idea that doesn't work. The flashy stuff brings in the new people, but there is no substance to make them stick around. A few years ago they cared about comics. I miss that.
Mike: It's a trend that won't stop. The collectors will keep buying the junky books because we love the characters, and the companies will keep putting them out because we keep buying them.
Adam: These "candy coated" comics are a waste.
Wizard: I really think this market is screwed up, with the legitimately good comics selling no better than the "candy coated" ones, as Adam said. From what you said, it seems like the big guys at Marvel and DC need to put the glitzy "push" on some of the smaller titles which are good but don't have a huge fan base, or do a really special job on the art and the story on a popular book that has a special cover. Like you guys pointed out, if they start the job with the cover, they should finish it with the content. Thanks for your time, and we'll talk again next month.

The Wizard's Crystal Ball

By Greg Buls

Hello again from the Wizard's castle! Even in the deepest, darkest passageways of the castle it's impossible to escape the summer heat. I plan on enjoying the sunny weather while it lasts, because the crystal ball is showing that this winter will be brutally cold. But I don't just look in the crystal ball for weather reports, I look into the crystal ball to see what's going on in my favorite hobby and pastime—comic collecting! More specifically, what books should I be buying next if I want the maximum value for my dollar?

A couple of books look good in June, and they're both Marvels: *Spirits of Vengeance* #1 and *Terror Inc.* #2.

Spirits of Vengeance is the first new title in Marvel's "The Midnight Sons" promotion. This will be Marvel's big summer push, introducing four new supernatural titles.

Spirits of Vengeance has a lot of things going for it. First, it's the second Ghost Rider title. This will cause retailers to underestimate demand, just like they did on *Punisher War Journal* #1 and *Punisher War Zone* #1. Ghost Rider and Johnny Blaze have a huge built-in audience, so collectors will love the chance to get in on the ground floor of another Ghost Rider first issue. Second, the book is a low-risk proposition. Despite the exodus of artists to Image, Marvel still retains the services of some of the best artists in the business. This book showcases the excellent art of Adam Kubert. I have seen a lot of the sample art for the book, and it looks terrific. With the art taken care of, the only possible concerns are that the writing will be poor and/or that Marvel will print an excessive number of copies. (This is what happened to *Wolverine* #50) Regular *Ghost Rider* writer Howard Mackie will be writing the stories. People seem to have come to realize that a title has a much greater chance of becoming and remaining popular if it's a sell-out rather than forever available for re-orders. Third, the fact that Mackie is writing both Ghost Rider titles will mean that there should be a great deal of continuity between the two books. I wouldn't be surprised to see stories which cross over between the two books. This will mean that *Spirits of Vengeance* will attract most of the readers of the regular *Ghost Rider* series. Fourth, the issue will be poly-bagged, containing a "Rise of the Midnight Sons" poster. Though the poly-bagging may or may not be justified, it will cause a lot of people to purchase multiple copies—one to read and the others to keep sealed. Finally, there will be three other series premiers and a lot of hype and excitement in the three months following the debut of this title. Marvel has a vested interest in seeing this title take off like a rocket. If it does, it will virtually insure the success of the Midnight Sons promotion.

The second book in June which stands out is the second issue of *Terror, Inc.* Last month, *Terror Inc* #1 was one of the books in the Wizard's Crystal Ball. *Terror Inc* #2 has two things going for it. First, the title is part of Marvel's "Big Guns" promotion (other books included *Punisher War Zone* #1, *Nomad* #1, *Cage* #1, and *Silver Sable* #1), and it is being ordered as if it were a much less significant issue. Second, the book features "the birth of a new supernatural hero." It's likely that this will be one of the heroes in the "Midnight Sons" books. If these books sell as well as they should, people will be earnestly searching for the first appearances of the characters involved.

That's it for this month! I'll see you here next month for more fun and frolic in the Wizard's Crystal Ball!

From The Wizard's Hat

PICKS

Here's a listing of the hottest books shipping in June!

Spirits Of Vengeance #1

Artist: Adam Kubert
Writer: Howard Mackie
Shipping Date: June 30th
Cover Price: $2.75

Spider-Man, The Punisher, The X-Men... all have multiple monthly titles, and for the longest time, comic fans have pleaded for another Ghost Rider book. Here it is. This time, Ghost Rider shares the spotlight with Johnny Blaze, ex-Ghost Rider and full time fan favorite. This 48 page first issue is chapter two in the "Rise of the Midnight Sons" crossover. Lilith (the mother of the Lilan demons) sets in motion her plan to wipe out the nine "Midnight Sons" who threaten her plans of global conquest. Each issue of Vengeance comes polybagged, with a mondo cool fold-out poster! The other "Midnight Sons" titles being released are *Morbius: The Living Vampire*, *Nightstalkers* and *Darkhold: Pages From The Book Of Sin*, all of which sound cool and will form the new horor sub-universe of Marvel Comics.

Savage Dragon #1

Artist: Erik Larsen
Writer: Erik Larsen
Shipping Date: June
Cover Price: $1.95

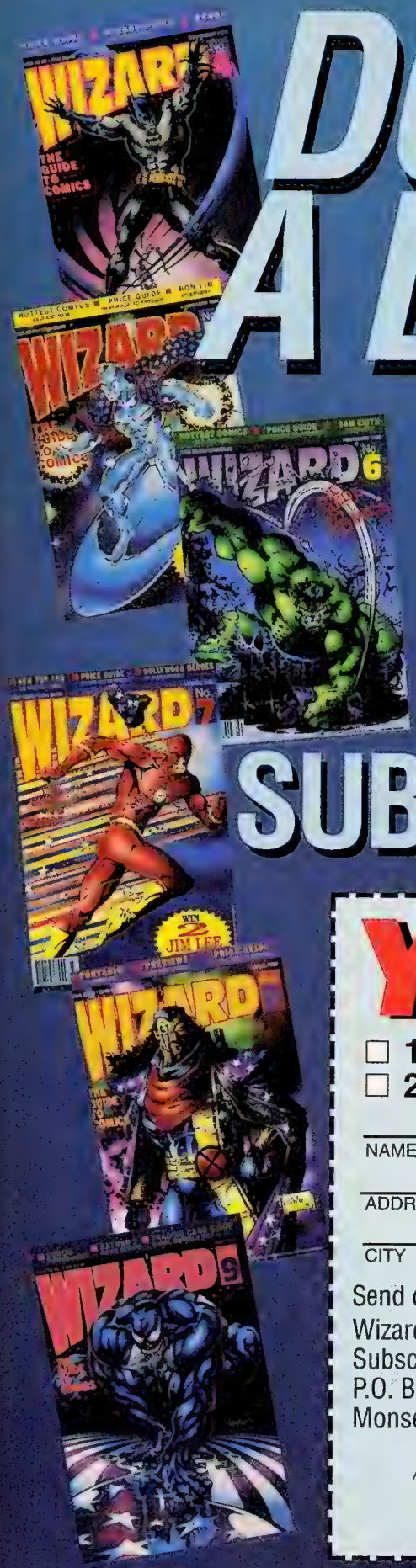
The Savage Dragon, created by Erik Larsen of Spider-Man fame, heralds the third new series from the ever growing line of comic books from Image Press. This premiere issue tells the story of Dragon, a really, really big green guy found unconscious and naked in a burning field. Awakening in his hospital bed, the Dragon finds himself totally at a loss when it comes to his past. Now, five years later, the Dragon has completed his training and is welcomed aboard as the newest addition to the Chicago Police Department. As their one man SWAT team, the Dragon's job is simple: take back the city that's been completely overrun by the ever growing population of mutants and superbeings, a city that's been turned into a hell. Youngblood and Spawn will both make guest appearances in this three issue mini series. *Savage Dragon* #1 comes with four different bound-in posters, which will be shipped in equal quantities.

Unity #1

Artist: Barry Windsor-Smith
Writer: Jim Shooter
Shipping Date: June
Cover Price: $1.00

WHOA! Unity #1, the epilogue to the mammoth two-month crossover from Valiant, shows the survivors of the war picking up the pieces. So who lives? Who dies? All the secrets are revealed in this hot wrap-up issue, which is sure to be a hot item down the road. *Unity* #1 will only be available in limited quantities, and allocations may occur. Take a peek over to what Valiant's been doing for the past couple of years. They produce high quality comics, with artwork that's really top notch, and a style of storytelling that's the way a comic is supposed to be. Valiant is a company that really delivers, so when you're hitting the local comic shops this June, pick up *Unity* #1, or any Valiant title. You won't be dissapointed.

DON'T BE A DWEEB!



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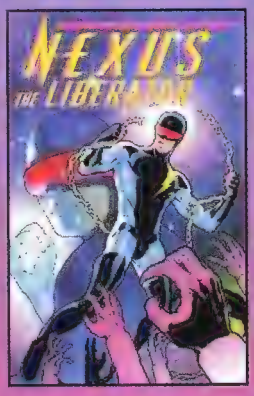
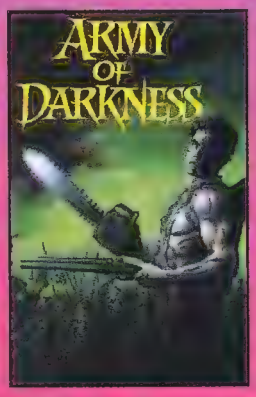
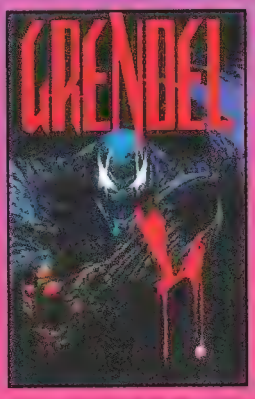
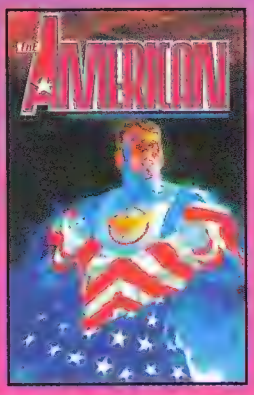
IT'S GOING TO BE A VERY HOT SUMMER









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THE SAVAGE DRAGON™

Created • Written • Illustrated By ERIK LARSEN

Chris Eliopoulos/Letters and Gregory Wright/Colors

On Sale In June From IMAGE COMICS!

image

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UNITY™

TIME IS NOT ABSOLUTE

THE MAJOR CROSSOVER EVENT OF 1992! It begins in UNITY #0, the FREE prologue issue and continues in the sixteen VALIANT issues to be released in MAY and JUNE, and ends in UNITY #1, a special epilogue issue to be released in JULY. Don't miss a moment of it!

VALIANT™

Ghost Rider #28

Artist: Andy Kubert
Writer: Howard Mackie
Shipping Date: June 9th
Cover Price: $2.50

Geez, those guys on the *Ghost Rider* book just won't turn down the heat. First, in issue #25 we had the pop-up death of Dan Ketch issue, followed by the sizzling two part crossover with the X-Men, and now this, the beginning of the "Rise of the Midnight Sons" crossover. The story goes like this: the death of Dan Ketch has driven Ghost Rider into an uncontrollable avenging frenzy as Johnny Blaze desperately tries to find a way to save Dan's soul. Also this issue, Blackout, that crazy monkey responsible for Dan's death, escapes from prison, and the mysterious Caretaker makes an appearance. Plus, (this is the cool part), the demon Lilith arrives on Earth and has a premonition that she and her followers will be destroyed by the combined might of the Midnight Sons. So, she does what any red-blooded mother of demons would do, she plans on killing them first! Each issue comes polybagged with a fold-out poster and gatefold center spread!

Amazing Spider-Man #365

Artist: Mark Bagley
Writer: David Michelinie
Shipping Date: June 9th
Cover Price: $3.95

It's here—one of, if not the most eagerly awaited book this summer. *Amazing* #365 celebrates Spidey's 30th Anniversary, and Marvel's pulling out all the stops. This 80 page...wow...80 page bookshelf format edition will feature an out of this world hologram cover! Okay, so it looks really pretty, but what's on the inside that makes this thing worth the four bucks Marvel's asking? Well, the lead story features an all out slugfest as Spidey goes head to head with the Lizard, as we find out what happened to the scaley one after last year's Torment series. And this issue features that shocking last page revelation that Marvel's been harping about for the last two months. Ooo, groovy. Plus a couple of back-up features, like a new Spidey origin story through the eyes of J. Jonah Jameson, a pull-out poster by John Romita Jr., pin-ups and more. Cool stuff.

MORE PICKS

Adventures of Superman #493
DC Comics ***$1.25***
The Blaze/Satanus War p1 of 4—Blaze moves against her brother, Satanus, for control of all Metropolis.

Alien^3 #1
Dark Horse ***$2.50***
In this bi-weekly adaption of the new film, the Sulaco crash lands on a prison planet with only one survivor, Ripley. Things go from bad to worse when an alien invades the compound.

Aliens: Newt's Tale #2
Dark Horse ***$4.95***
Newt, Ripley and the marines are on the run from the Aliens, as Dark Horse adapts the second movie from Newt's point of view.

Adventures of Superman #493

Batman Returns
DC Comics ***$3.95***
Batman faces the Penguin and Catwoman in this adaption of the hot new film, Batman Returns!

Batman: Shadow of the Bat #3
DC Comics ***$1.50***
Nightwing attempts to free Batman from Arkham Asylum as the caretaker, Jeremiah Arkham, slowly goes insane. Written by Alan Grant.

Black Condor #3
DC Comics ***$1.25***
The Black Condor's only friend tries to convince him to do something about the Sky Pirates.

Alpha Flight #111

Alpha Flight #111
Marvel ***$1.75***
Weapon Omega fights Wild Child as Gamma Flight battles Omega Flight!

Archer & Armstrong #2
Valiant ***$2.50***
Unity Chapter 11—Archer & Armstrong discover how much they need each other when they encounter the Legion of the Lost. Art by Barry Windsor-Smith.

Aquaman #9
DC Comics ***$1.25***
Eco-Wars p1 of 2—When the Sea Devils destroy an offshore oil rig, Aquaman must fight them while trying to save the animals hurt by the disaster.

Captain America #404
Marvel ***$1.25***
Man and Wolf pt 3 of 6—Cap battles Moonhunter with Wolverine waiting on the sidelines!

Daredevil #307
Marvel ***$1.25***
As the heads of organized crime, including Chainsaw, Silvermane and Deadpool, organize to replace Kingpin, the Punisher, Nomad and DD must stop them.

Darkhawk #18
Marvel ***$1.25***
Darkhawk battles Mindwolf. Can he stop this new foe, who fights with mind power—which Darkhawk has no defense against?

Aquaman #9

Avengers #350
Marvel ***$2.50***
This 64 page issue features stories with Cyclops, Professor X, Quicksilver, Guido and the Starjammers.

Avengers West Coast Annual #7
Marvel ***$2.25***
Assault On Armor City pt 2 of 3—Darkhawk and Iron Man enlist the Avengers West to help stop Professor Power.

Batman #483
DC Comics ***$1.25***
When two lovers engage in a horrible death pact, Batman must stop them before they, and innocents, are hurt.

Archer & Armstrong #2

Demon Annual #1
DC Comics ***$3.00***
The Darkness Within—Klarion the Witch Boy returns with one of Eclipso's black diamonds. His plan? Kill Jason Blood!

Eternal Warrior #2
Valiant ***$2.25***
Unity Chapter 10—Gilad and Armstrong fight against the Saurobots as Archer and Sting of Harbinger guest-star.

Excalibur #53
Marvel ***$1.75***
Excalibur investigates missing people and discovers the return of the Crazy Gang!

MORE PICKS

Flash Annual #5
DC Comics ***$2.50***
The Darkness Within—It's the Flash vs the Golden Glider as a gem robbery turns into a showdown with Eclipso!

Ghost Rider #28
Marvel ***$2.50***
Rise of the Midnight Sons pt 1 of 6—The spilling of Dan Ketch's innocent blood drives Ghost Rider into an insane avenging fury!

Green Arrow Annual #5
DC Comics ***$3.00***
The Darkness Within—Black Canary is taken over by the power of Eclipso, and Green Arrow and Batman must stop her.

Batman Returns

L.E.G.I.O.N. '92 #43
DC Comics ***$1.50***
The government of Yeltsin-Beta plans to kill all of the aliens on their planet, and they've ordered L.E.G.I.O.N. to help.

Lobo's Back #4
DC Comics ***$1.50***
Now that Lobo's been reincarnated once again, this time as himself, he sets out to find that bastich Loo and his brother, Feces.

Magnus: Robot Fighter #16
Valiant ***$2.25***
Unity Chapter 12—Finally, Magnus' true origin is revealed.

Green Lantern Annual #1
DC Comics ***$2.50***
The Darkness Within—Eclipso wants the power of Hal Jordan's power ring under his control, and his plans to get it just may kill Jordan.

Daredevil #307

Guy Gardner: Reborn #2
DC Comics ***$4.95***
Without his power ring, Guy's going to need someone pretty powerful to learn to fight. Someone like...Lobo! But will he destroy the Green Lantern Corps in the process?

Harbinger #9
Valiant ***$2.50***
Unity Chapter 16—Kris's child finally sees birth, and Sting's wrath is unleashed! Guest starring Magnus: Robot Fighter.

Next Men #5
Dark Horse ***$2.50***
Find out the identity of Tony Murcheson's secret contact, Control, as forces in Washington DC try to get involved with the mutates.

Nomad #4
Marvel ***$1.75***
Nomad travels to Las Vegas where he uncovers the crime lords meeting to decide who should replace Kingpin. Daredevil guest stars.

Punisher #67
Marvel ***$1.25***
Snakebite and Batroc are hot on the Punisher's trail as he follows his leads into Switzerland.

Infinity War #3

Infinity War #3
Marvel ***$2.50***
Four Freedoms plaza is reduced to rubble, Galactus's ship is destroyed, Spider-Man is in the hospital!

Justice League America #65
DC Comics ***$1.25***
The Justice League and Maxima continue their battle against Starbreaker for the future of Almerac.

JLA Annual #6
DC Comics ***$2.25***
The Darkness Within—As the JLA learns the true reasons behind Eclipso's return, they must fight off Wonder Woman, who has been turned against them.

Nomad #4

Punisher War Zone #6
Marvel ***$1.75***
The Punsher launches a full-scale attack on the Island of Sleeping Sharks as Shotgun guest-stars.

Rai #7
Valiant ***$2.25***
Unity Chapter 15—Finally, the battle turns in favor of the heroes. But is it worth the death of a major character?

Robocop 3 #1
Dark Horse ***$2.50***
OCP's plans to build Delta City is held up by homeless rebels and Robocop! How will OCP retaliate against Robocop's rebellion?

MORE PICKS

Robocop vs Terminator #2
Dark Horse ***$2.50***
Robocop realizes the horrible truth: The only way to prevent the Terminators from ruling the Earth is to kill himself! By Frank Miller and Walt Simonson.

Sandman #40
DC Comics ***$1.50***
Convergences Story Three—Lyta Hall's son enters the Dreaming where he meets Cain, Abel, Matthew, Gregory, and the horrible secret that no child must know!

Shadowman #5
Valiant ***$2.50***
Unity Chapter 14—Shadowman must fight against Magnus: Robot Fighter and the Eternal Warrior in this unfortunate battle.

Silver Sable #3

Superman Annual #4
DC Comics ***$2.50***
The Darkness Within—Lois Lane falls under the spell of Eclipso, as Superman must face an entire village of the villains!

Superman, The Man of Steel #14
DC Comics ***$1.25***
Tim Drake, the new Robin, teams up with Superman for the first time to investigate a Vampire that's using Metropolis for it's hunting grounds.

Uncanny X-Men #291
Marvel ***$1.25***
Colossus brother, Mikhail, and a Genoshan volley for control of the Morlocks after Masque's death. Art by Whilce Portacio.

Superman #70

Silver Sable #3
Marvel ***$1.25***
Battlestar joins the Wild Pack as Sable discovers treachery and betrayal in the Televangilist case.

Silver Surfer #69
Marvel ***$1.25***
The Surfer and Nova are kidnapped when Galactus's ship is hijacked by a new villain. Galactus is not happy.

Solar #13
Valiant ***$2.25***
Unity Chapter 17—The final battle with the god of Unity destroys all of the Lost Land. The entire Valiant line-up guest-stars in this climax of the Unity storyline.

Warlock & The Infinity Watch #7
Marvel ***$1.75***
Warlock and the Watch are completely surrounded by the Mole Man and his monsters. Will they listen to his plans?

Wolverine #58
Marvel ***$1.75***
Wolverine must recover from the loss of his love, Mariko, and fight the menace of the new villain, Terror!

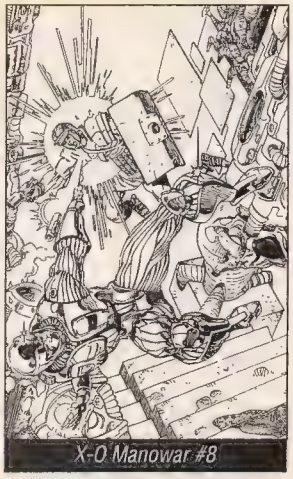
X-Factor #11
Marvel ***$1.25***
As X-Factor overcomes the threat of Hell's Belles, the Brotherhood of Evil Mutants begin their attack!

Superman Annual #4

Spawn #2
Image ***$1.95***
Spawn meets The Violator, as the authorities in New York investigate who Spawn is and what he's doing. By Todd McFarlane.

Star Wars: Dark Empire #4
Dark Horse ***$2.95***
As Luke becomes more involved with the Dark Side of the Force, Han and Leia are being hunted by Boba Fett!

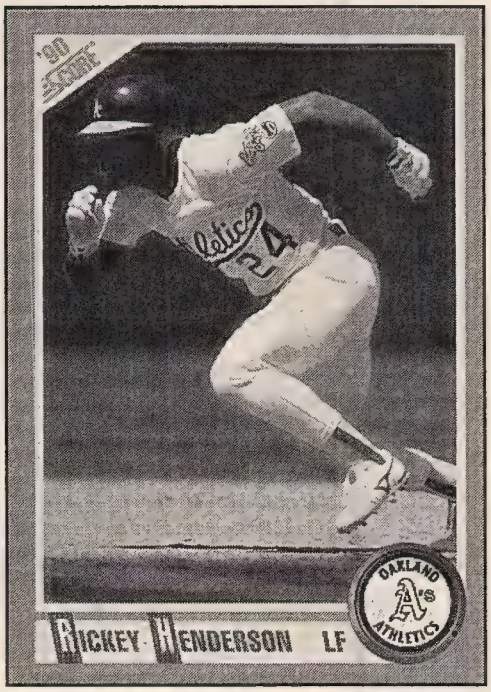
Superman #70
DC Comics ***$1.25***
As Superman and Robin track down a vampire, Blaze returns to the city.


X-O Manowar #8

X-Force #13
Marvel ***$1.25***
Cane (Weapon X) makes his move against X-Force as the Highlords do the same. Also introducing Weapon Prime!

X-Men #11
Marvel ***$1.25***
This is the final battle between Longshot and Mojo. By Jim Lee.

X-O Manowar #8
Valiant ***$2.25***
Unity Chapter 13—Despite being heavily wounded, Aric fights on against an ancient foe using firepower of the future!



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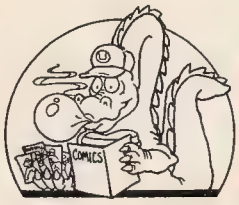

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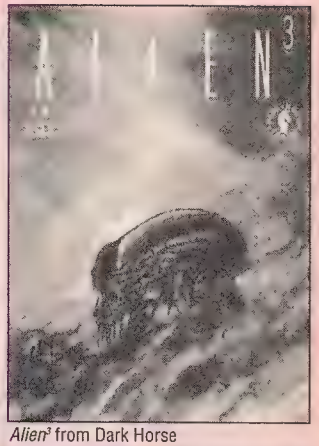
THIS MONTH'S NUMBER ONES

NUMBER 1

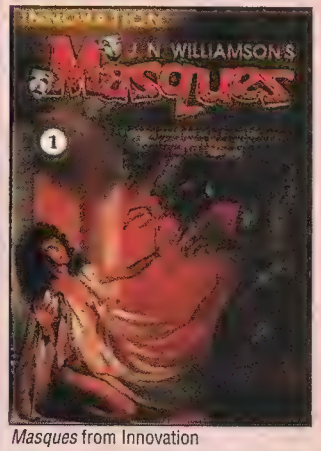
Comic book collectors place a great deal of importance on the #1 issues; since it's tricky to determine whether a book will succeed. You have to choose your comics very carefully and wisely. #1 issues have been known to appreciate considerably when a series becomes very popular. Here we have compiled for you all the #1 issues shipping for June. Happy Hunting!

For The Wizard Comic Watchers

Alien³ #1	Dark Horse
Alien Love #1	Comax
Alien Nation: The Lost Episode #1	Adventure
Anxiety Times #1	Eclipse
Best of Northstar #1	Northstar
Betty Page: The 50s Rage #1	Illustration
Borderline #1	Kardia
Bucky O'Hare Vol 2 #1	Continuity
Captain Thunder #1	Hero
Catchpenny Comics #1	Iconographix
Comic Chronicles: Ghost Rider #1	Comic Chronicles
Dead Crew #1	Fathom
Deathlok Annual #1	Marvel
Demon Annual #1	DC Comics
Doc Savage: The Devil's Thoughts #1	Millennium
Eclipso: The Darkness Within #1	DC Comics
Evil Ernie—Special Limited Edition #1	Adventure
Flare vs The Tigress #1	Hero
Green Hornet Anniversary Special #1	Now
Healthman #1	Real Life
Hell: Princess Of Darkness #1	Cutting Edge
J.N. Williamson's Masques #1	Innovation
James Bond 007: Serpent's Tooth #1	Dark Horse
Joe Dimaggio #1	Celebrity
Justice Society Of America #1	DC Comics
Lady Crime #1	AC Comics
Lazarus Churchyard #1	Tundra
Man Tiger #1	Dark Tower
Metallica #1	Celebrity
Mr. Lizard Special #1	Now
Ms. Mystic Vol 2 #1	Continuity
Ninja High School In Color #1	Eternity
Robocop 3 #1	Dark Horse
Rolling Stones: The Sixties #1	Personality
Savage Dragon #1	Malibu
Shadowtown #1	Iconographix
Skidmarks #1	Tundra
Space Usagi #1	Mirage
Spider: Reign Of The Vampire King #1	Eclipse
Spiderfemme #1	Spoof
Spirits of Vengeance #1	Marvel
Suburban Teens On Acid #1	Iconographix
Totally Rad Tales #1	Rebel
Unity #1	Valiant
Vampire Rock #1	Undead
Venus Wars II #1	Dark Horse
Vets #1	Real Life
Zen Intergalactic Ninja Vol 2 #1	Archie



Alien³ from Dark Horse



Masques from Innovation

Space Usagi from Mirage

Spider-Femme from Spoof Comics

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TOP 100 MAY- 1992

Here's the list for May...the countdown of the top selling titles sold as reported by Diamond Comic Distributors, Inc.

1 Spawn #1
2 X-Men #10
3 Batman: Shadow Of The Bat #1 (Collector's Set)
4 Uncanny X-Men #290
5 Infinity War #2
6 X-Force #12
7 Spider-Man #24
8 Web of Spider-Man #90
9 Eclipso: The Darkness Within #1
10 Ghost Rider #27
11 Wolverine #56
12 Wolverine #57
13 Batman: Shadow Of The Bat #1
14 Amazing Spider-Man #364
15 Batman: Shadow Of The Bat #2
16 X-Factor #80
17 Robocop vs Terminator #1
18 New Warriors #25
19 Lobo's Back #1
20 Warlock & Infinity Watch #6
21 Punisher War Zone #5
22 Silver Surfer #67
23 Unity #0
24 Silver Sable #2
25 Incredible Hulk #395
26 Silver Surfer #68
27 Punisher #65
28 Punisher #66
29 Cage #4
30 Terror, Inc. #1
31 Nomad #3
32 Fantastic Four #366
33 Excalibur Special
34 Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight #33
35 Archer & Armstrong #1
36 Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight #34
37 Batman: Catwoman Defiant
38 Captain America #402
39 Darkhawk Annual #1
40 Captain America #403
41 Batman #482
42 Next Men #4
43 Eternal Warrior #1
44 Batman: Penguin Triumphant
45 Excalibur #52
46 Deathlok #13
47 Darkhawk #17
48 Spectacular Spider-Man #190
49 Hell's Angel #1
50 Marvel Comics Presents #107
51 Batman #481
52 Aliens: Hive #4
53 Detective Comics Annual #5
54 Guardians Of The Galaxy #26
55 Marvel Comics Presents #106
56 Punisher War Journal #44
57 Doctor Strange #43
58 Superman, The Man Of Steel Annual #1
59 Guardians Of The Galaxy Annual #2
60 Detective Comics #646
61 Green Lantern Annual #1
62 Thor #449
63 Daredevil #306
64 Blood & Glory #2
65 Alpha Flight #110
66 Terminator: Hunters & Killers #3
67 Daredevil Annual #8
68 Avengers #349
69 Magnus: Robot Fighter #15
70 X-O Manowar #6
71 Green Lantern: Mosaic #2
72 Aliens: Newt's Tale #1
73 Batman: Run Riddler Run #2
74 Namor #28
75 Solar, Man of The Atom #12
76 Iron Man #282
77 Avengers West Coast #84
78 Shadowman #4
79 Original Ghost Rider Vol 2 #1
80 Harbinger #8
81 Green Lantern: Mosiac #3
82 Rai #6
83 Deathstroke: The Terminator #12
84 Wonder Man Annual #1
85 Pendragon II #1
86 Justice League America #64
87 Armageddon: Inferno #4
88 Guy Gardner: Reborn #1
89 Sandman #39
90 What If? #39
91 Justice League Europe #40
92 Wonder Man #11
93 Green Lantern #26
94 Arion, The Immortal #1
95 Quasar #36
96 Superman #69
97 New Titans #88
98 Sleepwalker #14
99 Warheads #2
100 Adv.of Superman #492

Who's in the TOP 100?

	# books in top 10	# books in top 50	# books in top 100
Marvel	**7**	**34**	**57**
DC Comics	**2**	**10**	**28**
Valiant	**-**	**3**	**9**
Dark Horse	**-**	**2**	**5**
Malibu	**1**	**1**	**1**

TOP TEN - MAY 1991

1 X-Force #2
2 Spider-Man #14
3 Infinity Gauntlet #3
4 Adventures Of Captain America #1
5 Punisher: P.O.V. #3
6 Ghost Rider #17
7 Uncanny X-Men #280
8 War Of The Gods #1
9 New Titans Annual #7
10 Terminator: Secondary Objectives #1

Toying Around

With Brian Cunningham

Part II: Search your feelings... you know it to be true.

With the overwhelming success of *Star Wars*, you knew the sequel was coming. Some believed *Star Wars* could have stood on its own, but others vehemently disagreed. After all, Darth Vader still lived, Jabba the Hut was still after Han Solo, and just who was gonna end up with Leia? All of these dangling plotlines were addressed in the most successful sequel since the *Godfather Part II*, namely *The Empire Strikes Back*.

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Kenner knew that after the popularity of the original 20 action figures, they had a good thing going. If memory serves, Ken-ner first hyped up Boba Fett, the bounty hunter in a send-away deal. This was a slick move for Kenner be-cause Boba Fett is arguably the finest of the entire collection. Kenner was in the money right there as they were firmly established as a consistently good toy company, and that type of success could carry them through another *Star Wars* film (and it did).

Getting back to the send-away deal for Boba Fett, there seems to be quite a bit of controversy surrounding it. You see, some believe that this Boba Fett figure originally came with a detachable rocket in his backpack but was discontinued because children were choking on it. Others believe this is false, and that the detachable rocket was only used in prototype figures. No one, it seems, has actually seen these figures, but the controversy remains. (If anyone out there has seen one or, even better, has one, tell me or send me a photo)

Kenner released about 30 figures in *The Empire Strikes Back* collection ranging from major characters to those you see for about half a second. All in all, Kenner had about fifty figures in the series so far. Originally, Kenner made a box-shaped carrying case that held the originals, but needed a larger one with the ESB figures. A Darth Vader carrying case was devised to hold all of them. This was quite ingenious because not only could you carry it around, but you could make it a nice decoration by hanging it on your wall!

The playsets and vehicles were nice, too. The Snowspeeder is one of my all-time favorites (but it should have come with a dead/electrocuted/crushed Dack figure). The Dagoba System set had its good points also. I used to thrill at Princess Leia drowning in the quicksand (that was fun). Ah, childhood...

Hey, besides the toys, the movie was darn good, too. I would have to say it's my favorite movie of the trilogy. Han Solo frozen in carbonite was more than interesting. So was Luke vs. Darth Vader, his father! The best line in the movie is when Luke left Yoda, and Ben Kenobi says, "That boy is our last hope," and Yoda, in his prophetic rasp, replies, "No...there is another." Whoa—and who could that "other" be? Foreshadowing at its best, folks.

Well, that's it for this month, folks. Next issue, come back for Part III or Jabba will lick you (yuck).

Special Thanks To..

Jon at Troll and Unicorn
5460 Brandt Place
Huber Heights, OH 45424

...for all your help with the Toying Around Price Guide.

Toying Around Letters

The "Name-The-Letters-Column" contest is still on, folks. Write your suggestions to me via the Submissions Department, c/o Toying Around. O'tay? Now on to your letters...

Dear Brian,

I disagree with Green Lantern being #1 on the "10 Greatest Superheroes Of All Time." What's wrong with Toy Biz's Wolverine? He by far looks better than Green Lantern! Before I go I'd like to compliment you on the great job you're doing; however, Green Lantern. Yuck!

Robert Gibson
Belmont, NC

Y'know, quite a few readers disagreed with GL, but you prefer Wolverine? To each his own, I suppose...

Dear Toying Around,

I have a few comments. Has there ever been a Namor, the Sub-Mariner figure made?

Does DC have any plans of putting out any full-scale series with major and not-so-major characters included?

Billy Wadsack
Lake Charles, LA

To my knowledge, there has never been a Namor figure, but he has made the Top 10 list. As for new DC figures, I heard a rumor a loooong time ago that Kenner had the license, but I'll check it out to see if it's true.

Dear Brian,

I really like your column. It's fun. Y'see, when I was young(er), my brother and I bought all the Kenner Super Powers collection, and we have almost all of them. I never knew they were collectibles.

I thought the super-size Punisher article was funny, but I thought you were too harsh—that is, until I saw a picture of it! I think it's good that you guard people against the worst-made figures like the Toy Biz Spider-Man (he's way too tall), and the Toy Biz Flash (you can't even use his arms).

Brian Frazelle
Alexandria, VA

Thanks, Brian! If I think a toy is lame, you'll know about it. Someday I'll do the "Top 10 Worst" of all time.

Mr. Cunningham,

Of all the features in Wizard I find yours the most appealing. However it also lacks depth. What about (1) the Captain Action doll whose accoutrements include Spider-Man and Captain America clothing and accessories (Released in 1967 by Ideal Toys, Inc.)? (2) The Mego 12-inch Superheroes—The Mego Fist Fighting Superheroes? (3) The die-cast metal and plastic figures? (4) Mego elastic superheroes? Of course I could go on and on but I think my point is made. I realize you're limited on space, so why not switch off instead of listing the same bland price quotes month to month.

Here's to yours and *Wizard's* long success.

Casey Lee Michaels
Indianapolis, IN

You bring up many good points, Casey. You're right in one area, though—I am very limited in space, which means I can only run prices on major stuff. Rest assured, though, when I get the room, I hope to include all of your ideas, along with *Star Trek* stuff. I don't "switch off" for the sake of new readers.

Top 10 most wanted action figures

1) Ghost Rider
2) Darkhawk
3) Lobo
4) Thanos
5) Nightwing, Super-Size Galactus (tie)
6) Adam Warlock, Deathstroke (tie)
7) Nova
8) Beast, Hawkeye (tie)
9) Psylock, Guy Gardner, Namor (tie)
10) Lizard, Rogue (tie)

I've taken off the characters who are already getting new figures. My, how the balance of power is starting to shift! Notice the entry of two females in the list! Send your top 10 today!

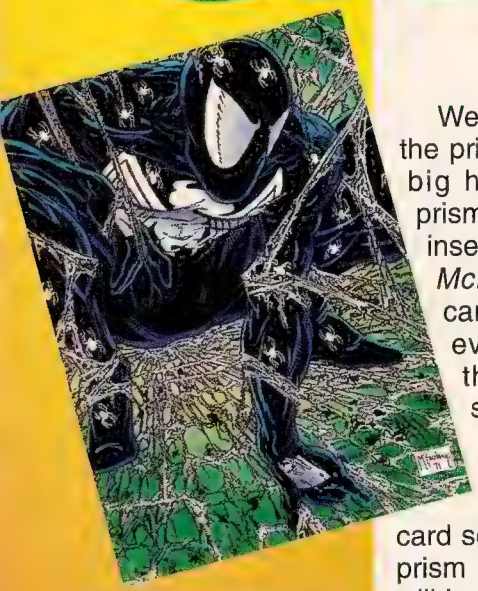
Create Your Own Figure Dept.

MAN-THING

This figure comes from G. Keefer of Jacksonville, Florida. How did he do it? Is that a Swamp Thing under there? Send us your photo with a description of how you made him, and we'll run it here.

THE WIZARD OF CARDS

By Stephen Shamus



The McFarlane Era Spider-Man (with the new Prism Cards) by Comic Inages and Star Trek: The Next Generation from Impel promise to be the hot new cards of 1992.

Well, the word is finally in on the prism cards. They're a very big hit with collectors. The prism cards that are randomly inserted in the Comic Images *McFarlane Era Spider-Man* cards are very popular and everyone is searching for these babies. There are six prism cards in all. Later this year, you can expect a *30th Anniversary Spider-Man* card set. This set, too, will have prism cards. These new prisms will be numbered #7-12. Seeing how well the prism cards went over, these should be very popular among the collectors. Also, a Wolverine card set is in the works, and it, too, will have (you guessed it) prism cards.

Impel has a new *Star Trek* set coming out. Although they did a phenomenal job, much better than series I or II, these cards are all of the *Next Generation* crew —not the originals. I'd imagine most of the Trekkers would have much preferred the original crew. Another *Star Trek* set you may want to be on the lookout for is the *Star Trek* tin set by Impel. It's Series I and II with all the holograms enclosed in a special tin can. There are also two bonus cards found only in the tin can. These cards are numbered and make the set a real collectable. Every Trekkie should own one.

Also from Impel comes a brand new Marvel trading card set, entirely *painted* by Mr. Deathlok, Joe Jusko. He's a real fan favorite, and these are paintings, so the set should do very well. I don't know too much more, but as more news develops, you'll hear it here first.

In other comic-card news, the original Marvel sets are still on fire, selling out of retail shops everywhere. The Series I and II are getting harder and harder to find. Look for these cards to keep going even higher in value.

The DC Cosmic Cards are not as popular as the Marvels but they are still popular sellers. I don't know if they'll catch on like the Marvels because the DCs are missing all of the Batman heroes and villains. The Batman characters are tied up in licensing for the movie, so expect a movie tie-in set later this year

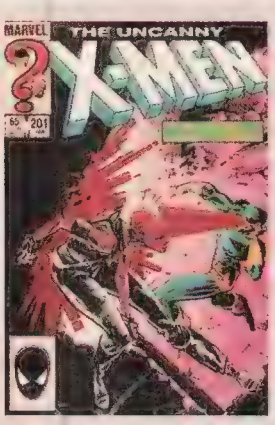
The X-Men Jim Lee cards are the hottest right now. Those cards are superb in quality and the artwork is unbeatable. Jim Lee has done a sensational job making these really great collectibles. Good work, Jim! Until next month, see ya!

TOP 10 JUNE 1992

We keep a very close watch on all the hottest books trading hands throughout the country. Here we have listed for you the 10 most commonly sold and demanded comics.

Uncanny X-Men #201

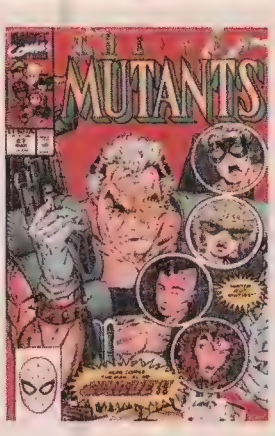
Artist: Rick Leonardi & Whilce Portacio
Writer: Chris Claremont



The winner and new champion...*Uncanny X-Men* #201!! As of this issue, *Uncanny* #201 is the only book to ever last four months at the top of the charts, though its future looks a little uncertain. What makes this book such a hot item is a rumor that Cable, the hottest character in comics, is actually Nathan Summers, the son of Scott (Cyclops) and Madelyne Summers. And though this story gets a little confusing because of time travel, this is that little bugger Nate's first appearance. And as we said, it may be a red hot book now, but other rumors are circulating that there's *no way* this could be Cable, and that Marvel's gonna prove it this summer.

New Mutants #87

Artist: Rob Liefeld
Writer: Louise Simonson



The undisputed first appearance of Mr. HBO himself, a.k.a. Cable, still clings to the #1 contender spot. Not only is this little doo-dad Cable's first appearance, but it's also one of Liefeld's earliest works on a mutant book. And to top it off, this was printed way back when the *New Mutants* were selling poorly, so the print run on this particular book was pretty low. So why isn't this book #1 on the charts? Liefeld's recent departure from Marvel has a lot to do with it.

Uncanny X-Men #266

Artist: Mike Collins
Writer: Chris Claremont

Thanks to the ominous future shown to us by the new X-Man Bishop, the Cajun charmer Gambit is one of the hottest X-Men today. And this, the debut of that heart-melting bad boy has moved up the charts to claim the #3 spot. But can he hold his new position on the charts? Gambit may be the evil mutant shown in that ominous future, and nothing kills your popularity quicker than being an evil mutant responsible for the X-Men's deaths.

Amazing Spider-Man #361

Artist: Mark Bagley
Writer: David Michilinie

Slipping a notch to the #4 position, this, the first complete appearance of Carnage, is still a hot ticket. When this book debuted, it instantly sold out and took the freight elevator to big bucksville. If being Carnage's first appearance isn't enough, *Spidey* #361 is the first chapter of the "Venom-Spawn" trilogy, which also guest stars Venom, Mr. Fantastic, and the Human Torch!

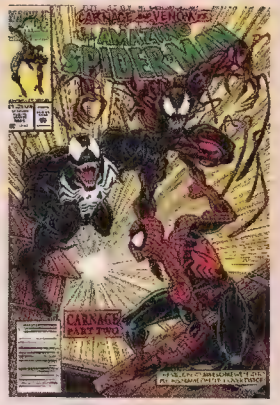
5 Ghost Rider #1

Artist: Javier Saltares
Writer: Howard Mackie

Thanks to the release of *Spirits of Vengeance*, Ghost Rider's second monthly title, *Ghost Rider* #1 has received a tremendous amount of renewed fan attention, since this is his first appearance and all. Add to that all of the mutant fans crazy over ol' flame skull due to his recent crossover with the X-Men, and you have a definite #1 contender.

6 Amazing Spider-Man #362

Artist: Mark Bagley
Writer: Dave Michilinie



Ah, part two of that nifty "Venom-Spawn" trilogy features the dramatic reunion of Spider-Man and Venom, as Venom thought Spidey was dead since issue #347. Not only that, we get to see Venom slug it out with Carnage, and even team up with Spidey to tackle the Venom-Spawn. To prove its staggering popularity, *Spidey* #362 even went to a second printing. With the first two chapters already in the charts, *Spidey* #363 has a chance to enter as well.

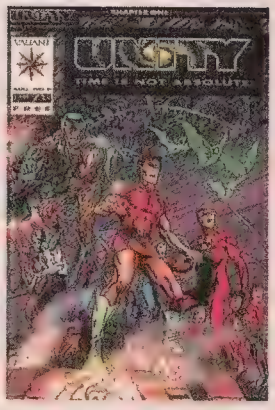
7 Spectacular Spider-Man #189

Artist: Sal Buscema
Writer: J.M. DeMatteis

Geez, there's more *Spideys* on this list than you can shake a withered old Aunt at. So, if this isn't a chapter of that groovy "Venom-Spawn," what is it doing here? Well, it's part of the 30th anniversary celebration for Spidey, but that's not the best part of this she-bang. Oh no. This issue has a massive hologram on the cover, and the storyline also builds towards the massive revelation from Spidey's past in *Amazing Spider-Man* #365!

8 Unity #0

Artist: Barry Windsor-Smith
Writer: Jim Shooter



No mystery babies, drooling aliens or shiny arachnids here. *Unity* #0 comes to us from those talented folks over at Valiant. This is the prelude to their mondo cool "Unity" crossover this summer. To show what swell guys they are, they gave out *Unity* #0 free last month, though it's doubtful you'll get it for that price anymore. Gee, you'd think some of the other companies would have thought of such a cool marketing gimmick...

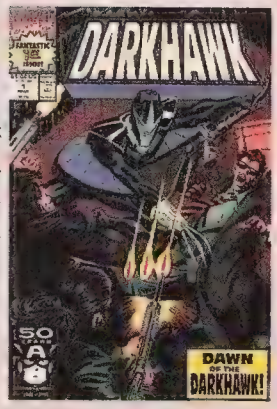
9 Harbinger #1

Artist: Dave Lapham
Writer: Jim Shooter

Hey, another book from those most excellent guys at Valiant. This, like most books from Valiant, has a really low print run and has really proven itself on the buck-o-meter. What makes this book so hot is that it's a realistic approach to the standard superhero team. Picture the way the X-Men used to be, but done in a style that makes the characters and situations believable. With Harbinger playing an intrical part in the big "Unity" crossover, expect even more attention to this title.

10 Darkhawk #1

Artist: Mike Manley
Writer: Danny Fingeroth



Holding its own at the #10 position, the first appearance of Darkhawk took most comic fans by surprise. When the old Hawkmeister debuted, he was sorta taken as a second-rate joke. Now, however, he kicks major butt in the popularity charts. And now with Darkhawk playing an important role in the upcoming "Infinity War" crossover, expect *Darkhawk* to climb even higher in the polls.

WIZARD Market Watch

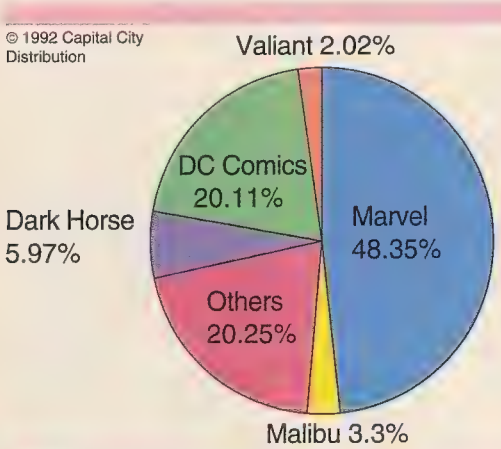
Congratulations are in order for Image Press. The all new creator-owned comics company's premiere issue, *Youngblood* #1, set an industry record for non-Marvel/DC sales with it's impressive 600,000-plus print run. To top that off, sales on *Spawn* #1 blew that record totally out of the water, with its 800,000-plus sales (That number is still rising. *Spawn* #1 may continue to sell over 1 million copies). Way to go, Todd. The jury is still out on how successful Image's other projects may be.

Speaking of *Youngblood*, it not only sold well, it sold *out*. Those stores with first prints still in stock aren't having problems selling the title for a few extra bucks. How long the higher price will hold is doubtful, however. When the *Youngblood* mini series reaches completion, all of the issues will be collected and sold at stores like Walmart. This is a good idea to introduce new readers to the book, but it really puts a bad taste in the mouths of fans who collect the book in the direct market. The *Youngblood* mini series is the only title Image is scheduled to release this way.

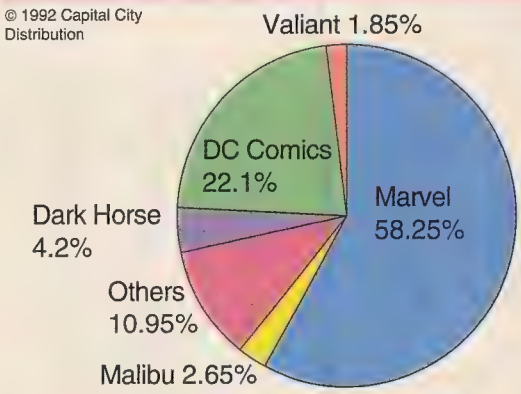
The release of the second Batman movie may cause a big stir in the box office, but it does not seem to have the fan impact of the first movie in 1989. The new series, *Batman: Shadow of the Bat*, and the other Batman one shots and mini series' being released this summer are not moving too quickly. Instead, most of the hype that fans are taking in this summer is from Marvel, with their Spider-Man's 30th Anniversary promotion. The release of the hologram covered *Web of Spider-Man* #90 and *Spectacular Spider-Man* #189 have really sent the comic world buzzing, and anticipation is high for the giant sized *Amazing Spider-Man* #365 due out this summer.

The imminent release of Alien³ has really sent *Aliens* back issues soaring. Be it their early appearances in *Dark Horse Presents* or their various mini series, those pesky acid-blooded critters are really heating up. The prices are not raising in ridiculous warp-ten jumps, but are slowly rising at an even pace, so they seem reliable. Other hot tidbits from Dark Horse include *Robocop vs Terminator* and *John Byrne's Next Men*.

Not surprisingly, Valiant continues to



Dollar Share of the Comic Book Market for April according to Capital City Distribution



Piece Share of the Comic Book Market for April according to Capital City Distribution

WIZARD'S TOP TEN HOTTEST ARTISTS

1. TODD McFARLANE
Spawn

2. JIM LEE
X-Men, upcoming project: *Wildcats*

3. ROB LIEFELD
Youngblood, upcoming: *Brigade*

4. RON LIM
Infinity War

5. WHILCE PORTACIO
Uncanny X-Men

6. MARK BAGLEY
Amazing Spider-Man, New Warriors

7. ERIK LARSEN
Savage Dragon

8. JOHN BYRNE
Next Men, She-Hulk, Namor, 2112

9. SAM KIETH
Marvel Comics Presents covers

10. MIKE ZECK
Deathstoke the Terminator covers

climb the price ladder with their current popularity fueled by the "Unity" series running through most of their titles. Of special interest should be back issues of *Harbinger* and *Solar: Man of the Atom*. Both titles are doing phenomenal, and their popularity rests on their low print runs and the high quality of the books themselves. No cheap gimmicks. Valiant's titles are the kind that have lasting power, not some "out of sight, out of mind" sales tool.

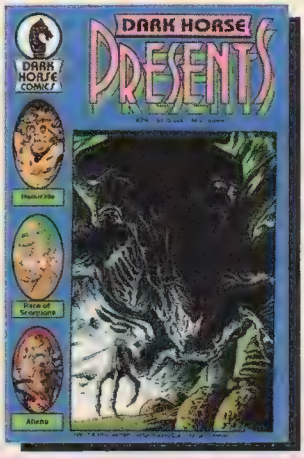
Marvel could very well have another monster on it's hands. Its two biggest sellers right now are the mutant and Spider-Man line of books, but their horror line could be the third. Spinning off the successful *Ghost Rider* series is *Spirits of Vengeance,* along with sister books *Morbius, Darkhold* and *Nightstalkers.* They all look promising, though the *Darkhold* series might have a little trouble catching on. As a whole though, this new line looks exciting and should do well.

With the release of the two new *Green Lantern* series' and the new *Lobo* mini series, DC has pushed a little into the limelight, but continues to be the sleeping giant of the comics industry. Though plans are underway for a host of new projects later this year, DC seems to be missing the spark that Marvel, Image and Valiant possess. The comic fans haven't been getting excited about DC's larger projects, and there's hardly a big DC hype about their books. DC had better find the missing piece to the puzzle which prevents them from being a bigger force in the industry.

THIS MONTH'S BIGGEST MOVERS

Amazing Spider-Man #274
from $4.50 to $7.00

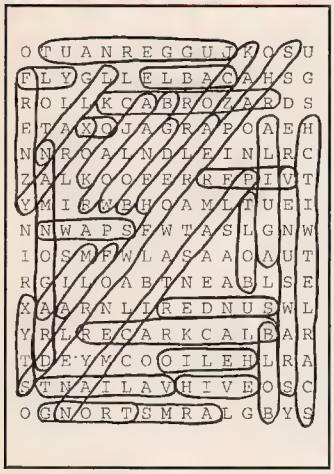
Amazing Spider-Man Special #5
from $50.00 to $75.00



Dark Horse Presents #24
from $18.00 to $25.00

COVER SHOTS from page 59

WORD SEARCH from p. 58



Word Break
from pages 59

1) Scarlet Witch
2) Cannonball
3) Black Panther
4) Midnight Sun
5) Carrion
6) Shadowcat
7) Magneto
8) Nightcrawler
9) Colossus
10) Constrictor
11) Juggernaut
12) Attuma
13) Porcupine
14) Big Bertha
15) Mister Hyde

C.B.I.Q.
from pages 56 & 57

1)C 2)C 3)A
4)A 5)B 6)B
7)B 8)C 9)D
10)D 11)C 12)D
13)A 14)B 15)B
16)C 17)C 18)D
19)B 20)D 21)D
22)A 23)D 24)B
25)C 26)A 27)D
28)D 29)B 30)A

Word Jumble
from page 58

1) Airwalker
2) Apocalypse
3) Baron Mordo
4) Black Cat
5) Bullseye
6) USAgent
7) Robin
8) Chapel
9) Wizard
10) Magnus
11) Solar
12) Ripley

Uncanny X-Men Contest
from *Wizard* #8

1) Excalibur
2) Predator
3) New Mutants
4) Manowar
5) Beyonder
6) Charles Xavier
7) Tim Drake
8) Dove

X-Men Code:
DEAD X-MEN

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SHOWS AND CONVENTIONS

CALIFORNIA

JUN 3 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$25 A:free 5pm-9:30pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

JUN 4 CA, NEWARK, Sportscard & Non Sportscard & Comic Show, Brookside Hotel, 5977 Mowry West. T:28 F:$40 A:free 5pm-10pm, Steve Marshall 510-887-0345

JUN 6 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$35 A:free 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

JUN 7 CA, OAKLAND, Sportscard & Non Sportscard & Comic Show, Executive Inn, 1755 Embarcadero. T:24 F:$40 A:$1 10am-4pm, Steve Marshall 510-887-0345

JUN 7 CA, SAN JOSE, San Jose Comic Book Show, Le Baron Hotel, 1350 N. First Street. A:$3.50(under8free) 9:30am-5pm, Carolyn 510-625-6975 or Dan 510-778-9099

JUN 10 CA, SAN LEANDRO, Sportscards & Non Sportscards & Comic Show, Marina Inn, I-880 exit Marina Blvd West to Neptune. T:21 F:$40 A:free 5pm-10pm, Steve Marshall 510-887-0345

JUN 10 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$25 A:free 5pm-9:30pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

JUN 11 CA, NEWARK, Sportscard & Non Sportscard & Comic Show, Brookside Hotel, 5977 Mowry West. T:28 F:$40 A:free 5pm-10pm, Steve Marshall 510-887-0345

JUN 13 CA, UNION CITY, Sportscard & Non Sportscard & Comic Show, Holiday Inn, 32083 Alvarado-Niles East. T:32 F:$40 A:$1 5pm-10pm, Steve Marshall 510-887-0345

JUN 13 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$35 A:free 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

JUN 13-14 CA, ANTIOCH/CONCORD, Collectable Card and Comic Book Expo, Contra Costa County Fairgrounds, 10th & L St. off Hwy 4. T:80 F:$25/day A:$2 10am-6pm, Christopher Alan 510-370-0283

JUN 13-14 CA, VENTURA, Mall Baseball/Sports Card Show, Buena Ventura mall, 363 S. Mills Rd. T:95 F:$95 A:free 10am-6pm(Sat)11am-6pm(Sun), Rocky or Yvonne Grimsley 818-466-8284

JUN 14 CA, HAYWARD, Sportscard & Non Sportscard & Comic Show, Esecutive Inn, 20777 Hesperian & A Street. T:24 F:$40 A:free 5-10pm, Steve Marshall 510-887-0345

JUN 17 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$25 A:free 5pm-9:30pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

JUN 18 CA, NEWARK, Sportscard & Non Sportscard & Comic Show, Brookside Hotel, 5977 Mowry West. T:28 F:$40 A:free 5pm-10pm, Steve Marshall 510-887-0345

JUN 19-20 CA, MARIN, Sportscard & Non Sportscard & Comic Show, Howard Johnson Hotel, 160 Shoreline Rd. T:30 F:$40 A:$1 5pm-10pm(Fri)10am-4pm(Sat), Steve Marshall 510-887-0345

JUN 20 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$35 A:free 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

JUN 21 CA, OAKLAND, Sportscard & Non Sportscard & Comic Show, Executive Inn, 1755 Embarcadero. T:24 F:$40 A:$1 10am-4pm, Steve Marshall 510-887-0345

JUN 24 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$25 A:free 5pm-9:30pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

JUN 25 CA, NEWARK, Sportscard & Non Sportscard & Comic Show, Brookside Hotel, 5977 Mowry West. T:28 F:$40 A:free 5pm-10pm, Steve Marshall 510-887-0345

JUN 27 CA, UNION CITY, Sportscard & Non Sportscard & Comic Show, Holiday Inn, 32083 Alvarado-Niles East. T:32 F:$40 A:$1 5pm-10pm, Steve Marshall 510-887-0345

JUN 27 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$35 A:free 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

JUN 28 CA, GLENDALE, So. California Comic Books & Sports Card & Collectable Con, Glendale Civic Auditorium, 1401 N. Verdugo Rd. T:90 F:$50 A:$2.50(under6free) 10am-4pm, Dean Chen 818-842-1861

JUL 1 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$25 A:free 5pm-9:30pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

JUL 3-5 CA, OAKLAND, First Annual Fourth of July Comic Con, Scottish Rite Center, 1547 Lakeside Dr. T:$195 (after6/15=$225) 12pm-7pm(Fri)10am-7pm(Sat)11am-6pm(Sun), Dan or Carolyn 510-625-6975

JUL 4 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$35 A:free 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

JUL 8 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$25 A:free 5pm-9:30pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

JUL 18 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$35 A:free 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

CONNECTICUT

MAY 31 CT, WINDSOR LOCKS, Comic Book Convention, Windsor Court Hotel, 383 South Center St. F:$30 A:$1 10am-4pm, Mike Wimbish 203-242-1189

MAY 31 CT, MIDDLEBURY, Sportcard Comics Racing & Non Sport Collectible Show, Post University, Drubner Center. T:80 F:$50 A:$2(under10$.99) 10am-4pm, Donald Ellis 203-746-7531

JUN 7 CT, STAMFORD, Stamford Sportscard & Comic Show, Stamford Marriott, 2 Stamford Forum. T:70 F:$45(6ft)$55(8ft) A:$2(under10$.99) 10am-4pm, Donald Ellis 203-746-7531

JUN 13 CT, NAUGATUCK, Baseball Card & Comic Book Show, Elk's Lodge #967, Rubber Ave. F:$35 A:free 9am-3pm, Thomas Bryk 203-723-9289

JUN 21 CT, MIDDLEBURY, Sportcard Comics Racing & Non Sport Collectible Show, Post University, Drubner Center. T:80 F:$50 A:$2(under10$.99) 10am-4pm, Donald Ellis 203-746-7531

JUN 27-28 CT, HARTFORD, The Hartford Civic Center Comic & Card Show, Hartford Civic Center. T:105 F:$30 A:$3 10am-4pm, Zach Schenker 201-488-6293

JUL 12 CT, WINDSOR LOCKS, Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn, 16 Ella T Grasso Tpk. T:25 F:$30, Mike Wimbish 203-242-1189

FLORIDA

JUN 21 FL, PALM BEACH GARDENS, Father's Day Sportscard and Comic Book Extravaganza, Holiday Inn at I-95 and PGA Blvd. T:40 F:$45,2@$80 A:$1 10am-5pm, Bill Berg 407-743-7636

ILLINOIS

MAY 30-31 IL, ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, Hobby & Collectibles Show, Forest View Educational Center, 2121 South Goebbert Rd. T:250 F:$75, Amazing Promotions 708-776-7176

MAY 30 IL, HARVEY, Comic and Card Show, South Side Exposition Center, I-80 & Halsted. T:50 F:$35 A:$1 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-3113

MAY 31 IL, BLOOMINGDALE, Card & Coins & Comics Show, Indian Lakes Country Club, 250 Schick Rd. T:50 F:$45,2@$80, Sports Cards Plus 708-776-7176

MAY 31 IL, DES PLAINES, Non-Smoking Sports Card & Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn, 1450 E. Touhy. F:$35 A:$1 10am-3pm, Louis Pinsky 708-567-9543

MAY 31 IL, NAPERVILLE, All Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, Warrenville Rd near Naperville Rd & Tollway I-88. A:$1 10am-3pm, Graham Crackers Comics 355-4310

MEET THE WIZARD

17th ANNUAL CHICAGO COMICON

JUL 3-5 IL, ROSEMONT, 17th Annual Chicago Comicon, Ramada O'Hare Hotel, Mannheim & Higgins Road. A:$10/day $25/three days 10am-6pm(Fri&Sat) 10am-5pm(Sun)

Special Guests Include:

Rob Liefeld, Todd McFarlane, Marc Silvestri, Jim Valentino, Erik Larsen and Whilce Portacio

SHOWS AND CONVENTIONS

JUN 6 IL, WAUKEGAN, Great Lakes Comics & Cards Show, North Chicago Inn, 2315 Greenbay Rd. T:30 F:$25 A:$1 10am-3pm, Jim Lebasci 708-336-9963

JUN 7 IL, ROSEMONT, Comic Book Convention, Horizon Skyline Room, 6925 N. Mannheim Rd. T:150 F:$45 A:$2 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-3113

JUN 13 IL, ROSEMONT, For Comic Lovers Only, Horizon Skyline Room, 6925 N. Mannheim Rd. T:45 F:$35 A:$1 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-8881

JUN 14 IL, CRYSTAL LAKE, Non-Smoking Sports Card & Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn, RT 31 & Three Oaks Rd. F:$35 A:$1 10am-3pm, Louis Pinsky 708-567-9453

JUN 14 IL, ELMWOOD PARK, Ray's Mini Video Comic Book & Sportscard Show, Elmwood Park Civic Center, 2 Conti Pkwy. T:50 F:$35 A:$1 9am-5pm, Ray's Mini Video 1-708-452-6214

JUN 28 IL, CHICAGO, Comic Book Convention, Ford City Holiday Inn, 7353 S.Cicero Ave. T:50 F:$35 A:$1 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-3113

JUN 28 IL, ROSEMONT, Comic Book Convention, Horizon Skyline Room, 6925 N. Mannheim Rd. T:150 F:$45 A:$2 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-3113

JUL 12 IL, CRYSTAL LAKE, Non-Smoking Sports Card & Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn, RT 31 & Three Oaks Rd. F:$35 A:$1 10am-3pm, Louis Pinsky 708-567-9543

INDIANA

JUN 14 IN, TERRE HAUTE, Terre Haute's 1st Comic Book Show, Days Inn, 2800 Dixie Bee Rd. T:40 F:$35 A:$4 10am-5pm, Joe Williams 812-232-0925

JUN 21 IN, MERRILLVILLE, Merrillville's Monthly Card and Comic Show, Slovak Club, 6920 Broadway. T:20 F:$25 A:$1 10am-4pm, Marilyn Hall 219-663-8561

JUN 26 IN, HIGHLAND, Highland's Monthly Card and Comic Show, Lincoln Center, 2450 Lincoln Str. T:20 F:$20 A:$1 6pm-10pm, Marilyn Hall 219-663-8561

JUL 5 IN, MERRILLVILLE, Merrillville's Monthly Card and Comic Show, Slovak Club, 6920 Broadway. T:20 F:$25 A:$1 10am-4pm, Marilyn Hall 219-663-8561

IOWA

MAY 31 IA, CEDAR RAPIDS, Cedar Rapids Comic Convention '92, Sheraton Inn, 525 33rd Ave SW. F:$50 A:$1 9am-6pm, Dennis Stick 319-365-4783

JUN 6 IA, PELLA, Baseball Cards & Comics & More Show, Pella Memorial Bldg. T:25 F:$25,2@$45 A:free 10am-3pm, Stacey Craig 515-673-4087

JUN 13-14 IA, DES MOINES, Baseball Cards & Comics & More Show, Couthridge Mall, 1111 E. Army Post Rd. T:60 F:$100 A:$free Mall Hours, Stacey Craig 515-673-4087

JUN 27-28 IA, JOHNSTON, Baseball Cards & More Show, Village Square Mall, 5800 Marle Hay Rd. T:30 F:$40,2@$70 A:free Mall Hours, Stacey Craig 515-673-4087

KENTUCKY

JUN 27-28 KY, LOUISVILLE, Comic Book & Sci Fi & Trading Card Show, Hurstbourne Hotel and Conference Center, Bluegrass Pkwy. T:120 F:$50 A:$2, Dusty Corners 502-499-0121

MARYLAND

MAY 31 MD, SILVER SPRING, Reality Comic Book Convention, Armory Place, 925 Wayne Ave. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

JUN 13 MD, ST. LEONARD, Comics & Cards & Collectibles Convention, St. Leonard Vol. Fire and Rescure Squad, 200 Calvert Beach Rd. T:20 F:$20 A:$2 11am-5pm, Wayne Zahn 410-586-1919

JUN 21 MD, BALTIMORE, Reality Comic Book Convention, Sheraton, Elm Rd at BWI Airport. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

JUN 27 MD, SILVER SPRING, Comic Book Convention, Armory Place, 925 Wayne Ave. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

JUL 4 MD, HAGERSTOWN, Reality Comic Books Convention, Ramada, 910 Daul Hwy (rt40). F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

JUL 5 MD, BEL AIR, H and M Comics and Sports Card Show, American Legion Post #39. T:45 F:$30(6ft)$40(8ft) A:$1 10am-5pm, Dan 410-838-4339 or Mike 410-879-5316

JUL 5 MD, SILVER SPRING, Reality Comic Book Convention, Armory Place, 925 Wayne Ave. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

MASSACHUSETTS

MAY 28-31 MA, CANTON, Comic Book Convention, Canton Village Mall, 95 Washington St. A:free Mall Hours, Bill Gouvalaris 617-289-8662

MAY 31 MA, RANDOLPH, Randolph Comics Collectibles Show, Temple Beth Am, 871 N. Main St. T:44 F:$35,2@$65 A:$1, Chris Eculeston 617-834-5865

JUN 18-21 MA, WATERTOWN, Comic Book Show, Watertown Mall, 550 Arsenal St. A:free Mall Hours, Bill Gouvalaris 617-289-8662

MICHIGAN

MAY 31 MI, LANSING, Comic Book Convention, Sheratin, 925 S.Creyts Rd.A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

JUN 13 MI, WHITE LAKE, Cards & Comics Shows, Great American Diner, 9531 Highland Rd. T:20 F:$25 A:free 10am-4pm, Tim Nichols 1-313-623-1299

JUN 14 MI, CLAWSON, Clawson Comic and Card Convention, Knights of Columbus, 870 N. Main. T:40 F:$25 A:$1 10am-4pm, John Green 313-779-1207

JUN 14 MI, ROYAL OAK, Encore-Con Comic Book and Baseball Card Show, American Legion Hall, 1815 Rochester Rd. F:$35 A:$1.50 10am-4pm, Michael Goldman 313-350-2633

JUN 14 MI, WALLED LAKE, Card & Comic Show, Chucker's Hall, 1172 North Pontiac Trail. T:40 F:$25 A:$1 10am-4pm, Tim 313-632-1299

JUN 27 MI, WHITE LAKE, Cards & Comics Shows, Great American Diner, 9531 Highland Rd. T:20 F:$25 A:free 10am-4pm, Tim Nichols 1-313-623-1299

JUN 28 MI, LIVONIA, X-Trava Con Comic Book Show, Knights of Columbus Hall, 19801 Farmington Rd. F:$35 A:$1.50 10am-4pm, Michael Goldman 313-350-2633

JUN 28 MI, WALLED LAKE, Card & Comic Show, Chucker's Hall, 1172 North Pontiac Trail. T:40 F:$25 A:$1 10am-4pm, Tim 313-632-1299

JUL 11 MI, WHITE LAKE, Cards & Comics Shows, Great American Diner, 9531 Highland Rd. T:20 F:$25 A:free 10am-4pm, Tim Nichols 1-313-623-1299

JUL 12 MI, WALLED LAKE, Card & Comic Show, Chucker's Hall, 1172 North Pontiac Trail. T:40 F:$25 A:$1 10am-4pm, Tim 313-632-1299

JUL 14 MI, ROYAL OAK, Encore-Con Comic Book and Baseball Card Show, American Legion Hall, 1815 Rochester Rd. F:$35 A:$1.50 10am-4pm, Michael Goldman 313-350-2633

MINNESOTA

JUN 21 MN, BRAINERD, Baseball Card and Comic Shows, Holiday Inn, Hwy 371 South. T:25 F:$30 9am-4:30pm, Kevin J. Bergson 701-235-2562

NEW HAMPSHIRE

JUN 4-7 NH, SALEM, Comic Book Show, Rockingham Mall. A:free Mall Hours, Bill Gouvalaris 617-289-8662

JUN 11-14 NH, ROCHESTER, Comic Book Show, Lilac Mall. A:free Mall Hours, Bill Gouvalaris 617-289-8662

JUN 25-28 NH, MANCHESTER-BEDFORD, Comic Book Show, Bedford Mall, Rts 3 & 3A. A:free Mall Hours, Bill Gouvalaris 617-289-8662

NEW JERSEY

JUN 7 NJ, WAYNE, Wayne Nostalgia & Collectibles Flea Market, Co #1 Fireman's Hall, Parish Dr & Rt 202 off 23N. T:108 F:$30 A:free 9am-3pm, Phil DeMario 201-696-6217

JUN 14 NJ, TINTON FALLS, Monmouth County Comic Book Collector's Spectacular, Holiday Inn, 700 Hope Rd. T:45 F:$45 A:$2 9:30am-5pm, Robert Jerdo Jr 908-341-8981

JUN 20 NJ, SEASIDE HEIGHTS, Jersey Shore Comics & Cards Convention, American Legion Post #351. T:36 F:$40 A:$2 10am-5pm, Ruth Campbell 908-269-9486

JUN 27 NJ, CARTERET, Comic Books/Sci-Fi Collectables Convention, St. Demetrius Convention Center, 681 Roosevelt Ave. T:60 F:$45,2@$85 A:$2(children$1) 9:30am-4:30pm, Sergio Candido 908-855-5852

JUN 28 NJ, ROBBINSVILLE, Central New Jersey Comic Book & Baseball Card Show, Washington Twp Volunteer Fire Dept. A:$2 9:30am-3:30pm, EMCEE Conventions 609-448-7585

JUL 5 NJ, TINTON FALLS, Monmouth County Comic Book Collector's Spectacular, Holiday Inn, 700 Hope Rd. T:45 F:$45 A:$2 9:30am-5pm, Robert Jerdo Jr 908-341-8981

JUL 12 NJ, WOODBRIDGE, Reality Comic Bood Convention, Sheraton, 515 Rt 1 South. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

SHOWS AND CONVENTIONS

NEW YORK

MAY 31 NY, QUEENS, Baseball Cards and Comic Books Show, A.Gordon Webster American Legion Hall, 107-10 Rockaway Blvd. T:35 F:$35 A:$1 10am-4pm, Joseph Caruana 718-845-7240

JUN 7 NY, FLUSHING, All-Star Promotions Monthly Comic & Collectible Show, Flushing Jewish Center, 43-00 1761st St & Northern Blvd. T:80 F:$45 9am-5pm, Matthew Deroma 718-463-6540

JUN 7 NY, SARATOGA SPGS, St. Clement's Monthly Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, St. Clement's School Gym, 231 Lake Ave. T:30 F:$35,2+@$30ea A:$1 1pm-6pm, Rocco Rosato 518-584-1429

JUN 12-14 NY, BINGHAMTON, North East Collector's Expo #1, Broome County Arena. T:375 F:$200,2@$350,3@$500 2pm-7pm(Fri)10am-7pm(Sat)10am-5pm(Sun), Adam S. Miller 717-238-5386

JUN 14 NY, OCEANSIDE, Long Island Comic Book and Collector's Market Convention, Rockville Cntr Holiday Inn, 173 Sunrise Hwy. T:40 A:free 10am-5pm, Cosmic Comics 516-763-1133

JUN 20 NY, NEW YORK, Our Lady of Good Counsel School Baseball Card and Comic Show, 323 East 91 Street. A:$1 10am-4pm, Kevin Mullarkey 212-289-6730

JUN 21 NY, RIVERDALE, Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, Riverdale YMHA, 5625 Arlington Ave. T:35 F:$55,2@$100 A:$2(members$1) 10am-6pm, On The Ball 914-794-2299

JUN 25 NY, BUFFALO, Comics And Cards, Polish Falcons Club, 445 Colubia Ave. T:42 6pm-10pm, Frank Caparaso 716-681-3422

JUN 28 NY, FARMINGDALE, Comic Book & Baseball Card & Toy Show, Masonic Temple, 197 Hempstead Tpk (rt 24). A:free 10am-4pm, Ray or Pat 516-669-4332

JUN 28 NY, QUEENS, Baseball Cards and Comic Books Show, A.Gordon Webster American Legion Hall, 107-10 Rockaway Blvd. T:35 F:$35 A:$1 10am-4pm, Joseph Caruana 718-845-7240

JUL 12 NY, FLUSHING, All-Star Promotions Monthly Comic & Collectible Show, Flushing Jewish Center, 43-00 1761st St & Northern Blvd. T:80 F:$45 9am-5pm, Matthew Deroma 718-463-6540

NORTH CAROLINA

MAY 30 NC, CLEMMONS, Saturn Mini-Con II, Arcadia Community Cneter, Community Rd. T:15 F:$25,3orMore $20each A:$1 10am-5pm, Allan Gann 919-764-4253

NORTH DAKOTA

MAY 30-31 ND, BISMARK, Baseball Card & Comic Book Show VI, Doublewood Inn, 1400 East Interchange. 9am-5pm(Sat)10am-4:30pm(Sun), Kevin Bergson 701-235-2562

OHIO

JUN 7 OH, COLUMBUS, Reality Comiv Book Convention, Sheraton, 2124 South Hamilton Rd. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

JUN 7 OH, TOLEDO, Toledo Comic Book and Sports Card Show, Ramada Hotel, 2340 Reynolds Rd. F:$35 A:$1.50 10am-4pm, Michael Goldman 313-350-2633

JUL 12 OH, ST. CLAIRSVILLE, Ohio Valley Comic Book Convention, Eagle's Hall, I-70 & Exit 218. T:30 F:$35 A:$2(under6free) 10am-4pm, Jeff Harper 216-493-0408

JUN 14 OH, COLUMBUS, Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn, I-70 at Hamilton Rd.A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

JUN 21 OH, DAYTON, Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn, I-75 exit 44. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

JUN 28 OH, ARKON-CANTON, Arkon-Canton Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn, I-77 & Arlington Rd. T:40 F:$50 A:$3(under6free) 10am-4pm, Jeff Harper 216-493-0408

PENNSYLVANIA

MAY 31 PA, EASTON, Easton Comic Book Show, 185 S. 3rd St and Larry Holmes Dr. F:$30(1stTable) $25 (each Addl.) A:$1 10am-4pm, Comicquest Productions 215-433-5223

MAY 31 PA, DELAWARE WATER GAP, Card & Coin & Comic Book Show, Ramada Inn. T:60, Adam S. Miller 717-238-5386

JUN 6 PA, PITTSBURGH, Reality Comic Book Convention, Greentree Marriott, 101 Marriott Dr. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

JUN 7 PA, HARRISBURG, Comic Book Convention, Harrisburg West Host, I-88 exit 18A.A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

JUN 14 PA, LANCASTER, Slug-Fest 4, Holiday Inn, 1492 Lititz Pike. A:$3 10am-4pm, Dan Heffner 717-426-4557

JUN 14 PA, PHILADELPHIA, Reality Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn Airport, 45 Industrial Way. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

JUN 28 PA, ALTOONA, Comic Book Convention, Ramada Hotel, 1 Sheraton Dr. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

JUN 28 PA, DELAWARE WATER GAP, Card & Coin & Comic Book Show, Ramada Inn. T:60, Adam S. Miller 717-238-5386

JUN 28 PA, HARRISBURG, Reality Comic Book Convention, Ramada Hotel, I-83 Exit 18A. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

JUN 28 PA, FOGELSVILLE, Allentown Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn West, I-78 & Rte 100. F:$30(1stTable), $25(2ndTable+) A:$1 10am-4pm, Comicquest Productions 215-433-5223

RHODE ISLAND

JUL 11-12 RI, PORTSMOUTH, Newport Antiques & Collectables Festival, Glen Farm, Rte 138. Show Promotion Inc 1-800-759-7469

TEXAS

JUN 6 TX, LIVINGSTON, Rookie Dealers Show, VF Factory Outlet Mall, 440 US Hwy 59 Loop South. T:20 F:free A:free 9am-1pm, Wade E. Thomas Jr 409-295-7277

VIRGINIA

JUN 13-14 VA, VIRGINIA BEACH, Great American XII, Great American Outlet Mall. T:90 F:$55,2@$105,3@$150 A:free 10am-6pm(Sat)12:30-5pm(Sun), Robert Earhart Jr 804-499-9491

JUN 20 VA, ARLINGTON, Reality Comic Book Convention, Howard Johnsons, 2650 Jefferson Davis Hwy. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

JUN 21 VA, RICHMOND, Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn (Fanny's), 6531 W.Broad St. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

WASHINGTON

JUL 12 WA, SEATTLE, Seattle Center Exhibition Hall. T:125 F:$60 A:$3 10:30am-4:30pm, Carl Waluconis & Bill Wormstedt 206-822-5709 or 206-827-5129

WASHINGTON, D.C.

MAY 31 DC, Reality Comic Book Convention, Armory Place, 925 Wayne Ave. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

WEST VIRGINIA

JUN 6 WV, MECHEN, Comic Show, 506 Marshall Street. F:$20 A:$1 10am-4pm, David or George 1-304-233-7766

WISCONSIN

JUN 14 WI, MILWAUKEE, Fantasticon 5, Sheraton Inn, 2303 N. Mayfair Rd. T:60 A:$2.50 10am-4pm, Fantasticon 414-871-1502

ATTENTION SHOW PROMOTERS

Having a show? Convention listings in the Wizard Show Calendar are free.

Send us:

Name of the show, Date and Hours, City,State & Address, # of tables & Prices, Admission charge, Contact Name and Telephone Number.

Send To:

Wizard Show Calendar

P.O. Box 648

Nanuet, NY 10954-0648

Or Fax:

(914) 354-9278

For certainty of placement, please send information 6 weeks prior to month of show. If possible, do not leave out any information. Shows missing Date,City or State information will not be listed. Please print clearly. Do not send flyers. Ad rates available upon request.

Gareb Shamus, Publisher · Pat McCallum, Asst. Editor

Magic WORDS

Wizard Press P. O. Box 648 Nanuet, NY 10954-0648

Hey, how ya doin? This month I—Pat McCallum, assistant editor and occasional writer here at Wizard—will be answering all your questions and comments here in Magic Words. Doug Goldstein, the guy who's normally back here, was given a little extra work to do this month, so I'm lending a hand. So without further ado...

Dear Wizard:

I've seen a lot of ads in various publications selling pages of original comic art by the likes of Barry Windsor-Smith and Rob Liefeld. The art is usually a single page (i.e. *X-Factor* #40, pg 20) and is offered for a price in the range of $50 to $250, depending on the artist. My question is this: If I buy a page of art, do I have the only copy in existence, or did I just buy a photocopy of the original? It seems there would be instances of counterfeiting. If this is the case, how can you tell which one is the real thing?

I am also wondering how these advertisers got hold of the art in the first place. After a book is published, who owns the art, the artist or the publisher? I would love to get some of Keown's *Hulk* pages or some of Sam Kieth's work on Wolverine in *Marvel Comics Presents*, but I am wary of ending up with a fake copy. If I wanted to buy the art, should I contact the artist or the publisher? Thanks for any information you can provide, and keep up the good work.

Dan Carney
Walpole, MA

First of all, there are several ways to know you have a real original page of comic art and not a conterfeit: 1. Comic-book art is done, usually, on two-ply bristol board. If the art is on anything thinner (like photocopy paper), it's probably not real. 2. Most of the artists working for Marvel and DC use boards supplied by the publishers that have light blue guide lines and forms for indicating the book title and issue number on them. Who the finished art "belongs" to is a question that's somewhat fuzzy. Many artists will argue that they've sold the publisher only publishing rights to the art, and that physical ownership of the art is the artist's. Some artists sell their art through dealers and agents; others do it themselves (frequently at conventions); and of course, anyone who has bought a piece of art in the past is free to sell it to someone else. If you see ads for art from the pre-70's, there's a good chance it's been through many hands since the artist worked on it. If you're interested in work from particular artists, contact them through the publisher, and find out how they sell their art.

Dear Wizard,

After reading T. C. Costulius' letter in *Wizard* #8, I felt compelled to write. Maybe with your ties to Marvel you can answer my question.

In 1991, Marvel Comics' net income tripled what it was in 1990. Their revenue rose 59%. Their overall expenses dropped. My question, then, is this: Why the price hike? If Marvel is taking in more money, then I don't feel it's right for them to put a $.25 price increase on most of their books.

I would appreciate some type of explanation, as the country is not currently experiencing what most would call an economic "boom."

John M. Hardin
Louisville, KY

Well John, nobody likes a price hike, but Marvel did have a reason or two for giving it to us. Their printer, World Color Press, recently went "employee-owned" and replaced all of their printing presses with new, modern machinery at a very high cost. You may have noticed that recently, Marvel's books have been on a higher quality paper, and generally look a lot better than they used to. This change didn't come too cheaply for Marvel. Believe me, nobody likes to raise the prices on their books.

Dear Wizard,

I demand to know why *Moon Knight* comics are not worth as much as some of the other titles like *Ghost Rider*.

Jason Chao
San Fransisco, CA

Because Moon Knight's lame.

Dear Wizard,

I just have to tell you that your guide is the most accurate one being published. It's also the easiest to understand.

Since I've only been collecting comics for about 6 months, this is the first time I have written a letter like this. Being new at this, I was hoping you could answer a few of my questions.

1) Regarding your card guide section—could you explain how you published prices for the X-Men cards before they were released and how they were calculated?

2) In *Silver Surfer* #63, Captain Marvel hints that he might be coming back to life again. Does Marvel have any plans to bring him back?

3) What is the best way to store my comics? Someone told me that if I put them in bags not to tape them shut, but

in every comic shop I have been in the bags are always taped. Someone also told me that a good way to keep your comics protected from humidity is to put those "anti-moisture things" that are packaged with asprin in the box with my comics. Is this true or will the chemicals in it harm my comics?

Until Thanos goes on the slim-fast diet, I'll be buying *Wizard.*

Christopher Morrill
Tempe, AZ

Howdy Chris. Thanks for the kind words. First off, we price the card sets by looking at how much the sets are worth, how many sets come out of a box, and how much the boxes are worth. The individual cards are priced by finding out the average price of a card in a set, and then adjusting for its scarcity and by the character's popularity. We then pass it by some retailers, and see what they have to add. As for Captain Marvel coming back from the dead, I wouldn't doubt it, knowing Marvel. Finally, a good way to keep your comics is to put them in bags with backing boards, and store them in those nifty comic boxes. As for tape—go for it, dude. Those "anti-moisture things" (known as AMT's in scientific circles) sound like a good idea. I'd try it out with a couple of comics first (put them outisde of the bags), and if it works out, use them regularly.

Dear Wizard,

I would like to ask who I would write to if I wanted permission to break the copyright restrictions on a Marvel comic book. Me and a group of friends are working on a video game starring the awesome Deathlok. However, due to copyright restrictions, we can't without written permission.

Wesley Joyner
Cocoa, FL

Well, my suggestion to you is to not screw around with any copyright restrictions. If you want to make something using somebody else's property (like Deathlok), you have to go through the proper channels. The legal department is the first step. And as for creating your own video game, try writing those video wizards at *Electronic Gaming Monthly* magazine for a few tips.

Dear Magic Words,

Number nine had a great cover! I don't think all the hoopla around this "mystery cover" was necessary, though. The Image Comics interview was the single best thing in your entire run. It was great. I've read it over and over again! I can't wait for Image to start up. By the way, I think your *Youngblood* release dates are a little early because I don't know anybody who can even come close to a *Youngblood* and your book says that issue #3 should be out already. I had heard something about artwork being lost in the mail—was that what was holding it up?

Chris Woodard
Orchard Park, NY

Howdy Chris. I'm glad you liked our "mystery cover." We here at Wizard thought it was pretty nifty. As for the *Youngblood* #1 release date, it was all screwed up. The first issue of that series was about two months late, and we kept running the later issues according to their original release dates, so they were also screwed up. And as for the "artwork lost in the mail" theory, we've heard it too. It seems that Liefeld had completed the book a little behind schedule to start with, and then some pages were lost in transit, forcing him to completely re-draw them. The end result was a two-month delay.

Dear Wizard,

I have a few questions that you could hopefully clear up.

1) Could Wolverine cut through his own bones?

2) How does Cyclops' ruby-quartz visor work? Does he telepathically control it to let out the blasts or what?

You should also do a special article reviewing different comic book related video games for all the different systems. Well, until Wolverine and Deathstrike tie the knot, make mine Wizard.

David Conlin
Lompoc, CA

1) Perhaps. If a diamond can cut a diamond, then adamantium should cut adamantium. 2) This one's tricky. Marvel insists that he has to push those little doo-dads on his visor to shoot his beam, but he has been shown simply firing without doing anything. My guess is that if he "pushes" hard enough with his power, he doesn't have to hit the buttons, but for little ones he does. And as for your suggestion to review video games, we tried that a few issues ago and fan response wasn't that great. If enough people ask for it, we'll bring it back.

Dear Wizard,

Now I have a theory for you to think about. Remember when Bishop, of the Uncanny X-Men, said that Professor X was killed by one of the X-Men? Well, I have an idea of who might have done it. No, not Gambit, that would be too obvious. I think that it was Marvel Girl. Before all of you start to shoot me down, listen to my explanation. When Marvel Girl transferred her mind into the body of the White Queen, I believe that this somehow either merged her mind with that of the White Queen or that it lied dormant inside of Jean Grey's mind. That would explain why Professor X could not complete his mind-scan on her after she was returned to her own body. This could be Bishop's true adversary. So, what do you think? I sure hope that you answer my letter, because I am dying to know if anyone out there agrees with me.

Joey Hughes
San Antonio, TX

Your theory sounds cool, but with a little examination, it's kinda thin. The future shown to us has Jean Grey as one of the last surviving X-Men, desperately trying to find help. It's doubtful that she's the traitor. but if anybody out there can back up Joe's theory, or has a theory of their own, send it in. As for the "who's the traitor?" debate, remember in *Uncanny X-Men* #287, when Jean Grey says,"...should never have trusted...we knew so little about you.." to her unseen attacker? Who fits that bill, would be unsuspecting, and might pull it off? Don't laugh, but our money's on Jubilee.

Dear Wizard,

I'm writing to congratulate you on *Wizard* #8. The cover was the best. Now just Jim Lee and my life will be complete.

On to serious stuff. To that guy who insulted the X-Men by writing about that award winning, hot selling, super-hot pick, never an issue left on the shelf *Iron Man*: Kiss my mutant loving butt! Anyone who insults a mag like the *X-Men* is no real comic collector.

Nathan Hill
Schertz, TX

Oooo! For this letter, I'm handing the letters page back to Doug "The guy who insulted the X-Men" Goldstein for a second:

AWESOME!

That's the only word to describe the San Diego Comic-Con, the biggest and best comic arts festival in the United States!

You want to meet pros? They're all here—nearly 1,000 of them! Todd McFarlane and the whole Image gang will be on hand, plus John Byrne, Mark Bagley, Frank Miller, Clive Barker, Kevin Eastman, Bernie Wrightson, Chris Claremont, and other favorites. And you'll get to see famous creators like Jack Kirby, Will Eisner, Julius Schwartz, and Stan Lee, underground greats Bill Griffith ("Zippy the Pinhead"), Gilbert Shelton, and Diane Noomin, Italian artist Milo Manara, and Academy Award–winning director Ray Harryhausen, to name just a few. You can even get sketches from the more than 100 artists in Artists' Alley!

You want collectors' items? The largest dealers' room of any convention has more than 500 booths and tables—124,000 square feet of collectors' heaven! You'll find rare comics, trading cards, original art, Japanese animation, pins, T-shirts, posters, and more! You can even watch your favorite artists draw at easels, then bid on these one-of-a-kind items!

You want to have fun? Comic-Con has activities day and night. You can see your favorite films and animated classics in the films rooms, role-play to your heart's content in the gaming rooms, attend the masquerade, and hang out in the Con Suite, always stocked with soft drinks and snacks. And then there are the parties—boogie away the night to live bands!

And we haven't even mentioned the six tracks of programming, the autograph signings, the Eisner Awards ceremony or the Inkpot Awards banquet, the art show, the blood drive, and the fact that every major comics company will have a booth here!

Four fabulous days of comics nirvana for just $36 membership ($45 after July 10 and at the door)! For more information call 619-685-8118, send a fax to 619-544-0743, or write to Comic-Con, P.O. Box 128458, San Diego, CA 92112. For hotel and airfare reservations, call Travel Planners: 800-221-3531 (212-473-4688 from area codes 212, 516, 718, and 914).

Don't miss out on the most awesome event of the year!

23rd Annual

SAN DIEGO COMIC CONVENTION

AUGUST 13–16, 1992

San Diego Convention Center

111 W. Harbor Drive, Downtown

The SDCC, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation devoted to advancing the popular arts.

Look here, Nate. What I said was Iron Man could defeat the X-Men single handedly. This is true. I don't dislike the X-Men, and I wasn't insulting them, I was just pointing out that there's someone out there that is a lot more powerful than all of them put together. And for your information, Iron Man was popular decades before you little mutant-worshipping-maggots ever heard of the X-Men. People have forgotten what it means to be a cool character because some other books have flashy art and half naked women in them. So you and your butt can just chill, okay?

Dear Wizard,

I love your price guide but there are some spots that need improvement like the "Wizard Market Watch." Bring back the market share charts and do away with the covers of hot issues. The color charts of the market share and dollar share is a much better indicator of how well a company like Valiant is really doing! Whereas, an *Alpha Flight* #106 cover is just a one-shot gimmick that will fall back to reality. Speaking of an up and coming company, how about a Wizard contest featuring Valiant titles as prizes? We hear so much of Valiant, put your money where your mouth is! I'm tired of *X-Men* #1A-E as prizes.

Winston Joe
Brooklyn, NY

A lot of people don't share your opinion on the chart indicators. They wrote in asking for a change, so we changed it. As you know, our policy has always been to listen to the fans. As for Valiants in the contests—you should be very happy with what we have coming.

Dear Wizard,

I have one important sentence to say: GET AN INTERVIEW WITH GEORGE PEREZ!!!!!!!! Sorry, I couldn't control myself. I just have to know if you have any plans for him doing a cover and/or an interview. Well? Do you? If not, persuade him to do *something*! Just tell him some people (most people) would like to see his work again.

Aaron Trotter

We're working on the George Perez cover/interview thing. Rumor has it that he'll be doing some *Incredible Hulk* work for Marvel.

Dear Wizard,

Recently, I purchased *Thanos Quest* #2 for $5 at a collector's show. The dealer looked inside the front cover and said it was a second print.

Later, I looked inside and could not find any "second print" wording. Did I stumble on to a bargain "first print?" Or is there another way that would indicate a second print *Thanos Quest* #2? Thanx!

Shannon Whorton
Rockdale, TX

Check inside the inside front cover or the first few pages for the second printing marker, and also look for this numbering system: "10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0." If it's a complete 10 to 0 or 10 to 1, then it's a first printing. Anything else would be a second, third, or fourth print, etc.

Dear Wizard,

I think your magazine is the best in the universe. The covers can't be beat. The interview questions are questions that I may have asked if I had interviewed the person myself. The price guide for comics is the best. I always buy your hot picks because they're always correct. Amazing Artists is awesome, because you could be looking at the next Jim Lee. Who will be the next creative team for *Punisher War Zone* after the Romita Jr. team leaves the book after issue six? Enclosed is a nifty little bribe to get this letter printed. Enjoy it.

Don Crockett
South Lyon, MI

Glad you like Wizard. As for your question, John Romita Jr. and writer Chuck Dixon will be staying on *War Zone* until at least issue ten, and maybe even a little longer. And as for the page from the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue, it worked really well as a bribe. Thanks.

Dear Wizard,

You probably don't get mail from girls very often, but I just want to write in to tell you that I really appreciate your magazine.

Diane Marlowe
Carlise, PA

Y'know, Diane is right. It's incredible how few letters from girls we receive. Out of the thousands of letters that have flooded Wizard HQ, only about a dozen have been from female fans. So, to any of you babes out there in comic land, if you have something to say, write in!

Dear Dudes At Wizard,

I was kinda hoping that you would get an interview with Todd McFarlane on his new comic *Spawn*. Do you think you could get one with him in the next couple of issues?

Matt Ankerich

No.

Dear Wizard,

Lobo is the man—don't you dweebs forget it—put him on a cover soon. Speaking of covers—where's the DC covers? What is Wizard—the "up with Marvel" society? How'z about Robin or the Joker or Terminator, Predator or Aliens—or Badger—anyone besides just fraggin' Marvel...like maybe Lobo!

Idea for Pat McCallum's Collecting Comics In The 90s column: shrinkwrap. What does it do? Is it better than mylar? Does it continue to shrink? Is it acid proof/acid free? And go in-depth—not some chincy article like the one on polybags in *Wizard* #8. That was too short. You guys need to dig more in-depth into your articles. Less pictures! You guys are one yard short of a touchdown magazine. The format is awesome so keep up the good work! Just put some more beef in this burger.

Stephen Kahle
Apollo, PA

We do more than just Marvel characters on the covers. We have done DC, Valiant and Image. We have a Lobo cover in the works with Simon Bisley, but who knows when it'll run. Hey, good idea for my column, Collecting Comics In The '90s. Maybe I'll do that next month.

Dear Wizard,

I would like to know why the mutant books are so complex and confusing, sometimes it doesn't even make sense. For example, the character Cable. If he is from the future, wouldn't he change the future by doing whatever he's doing in the past? The same goes for Bishop. He must exist in the future in order to come to the past. But mutants can't live forever, they'll grow old and die. Most likely Bishop will die before he's born in his world (this is getting confusing, I even begin to not understand what I'm trying to say). Can you explain this time-travelling thing and how it affects the future (or the past or whatever)?

I would also like to know how I could become a story writer (the one that's not going to confuse the readers) for comic books. Must I be talented in

drawing in order to get a job in the comic world?
Elbert Lee
Yonkers, NY

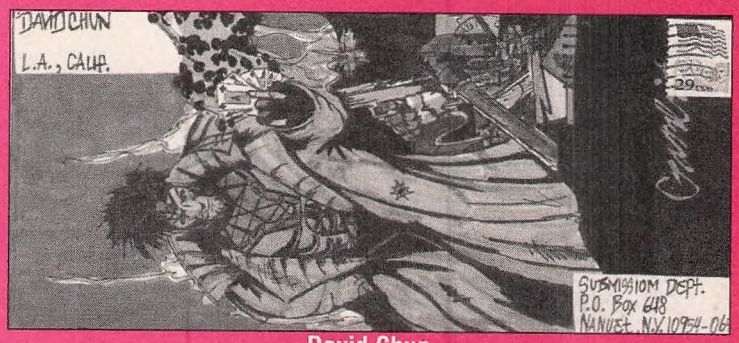
I agree with you. Marvel's mutant line of books are pretty confusing. And as for the time-travelling thing, well, it's like this...you go back in time to alter the past, but then the past is altered so you don't have to go back in time in the first place, but then you do because now the past is the same so you do but then you don't...um, yes. To get a job in comics, practice whatever you're good at. If you're a writer, write. When you can, show your work to editors and other writers and mail them to other companies until they're sick of you. Who knows—someone might hire you.

Dear Wizard,
We have some great information that we thought you might be interested in. We have a wild idea. *Guardians Of The Galaxy* #17-21 presented an interesting character by the name of "Crazy Nate." Does the name Nate ring a bell? If not, here's a clue: Nathan! If you still haven't caught on, here's another clue. Crazy Nate got his eye shot, his left eye, in #18. His eye was replaced with a bionic left eye which flashed throughout the issue. They even hinted about his arm, his left arm, being replaced by a bionic prosthesis. Coincidence? We think not! This guy is Cable!! Who else could this possibly be? Same eye, same name. The future of Cable's past has been revealed. You got it from us. We'll be writing again soon.
The X-Crew:
Jeff, Chad, Will and Effy (don't ask)

Just when you think you've laid to rest the Cable controversy, a new rumor rears it's ugly head. So what do the rest of you readers think? Is Crazy Nate Cable? Will *Guardians of the Galaxy* #17 become the new *X-Men* #201? Are we grasping at straws here? Hey, who knows? If anybody can add to the X-Crew's theory, write in and we'll see if there's any truth to this thing.
Well, that's about it. It was fun doing Magic Words this month, and maybe I'll do it again sometime. Doug will be back next month, so until then, adios and take care.
-Pat.

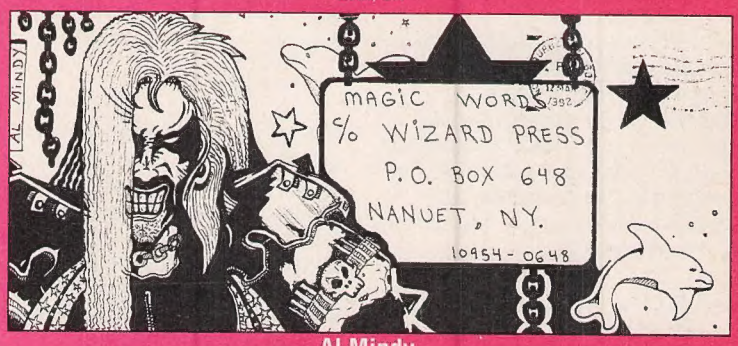
Fabulous Letter Art

Thanks for the terrific letter art. Every month our diehard fans with talent to burn adorn their praise (or complaints), sometimes, we think, just to get a little extra attention. Guess what. It works. Here's four for this month!

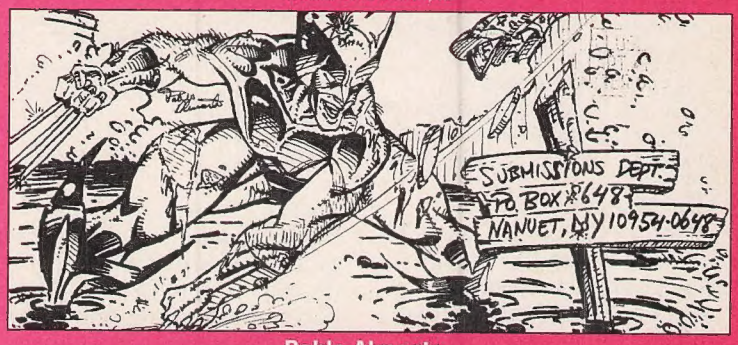


David Chun
Los Angeles, CA

Bryan M. Koerner
Kent, OH



Al Mindy
Round Lake Beach, IL



Pablo Almonte
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